

EXPLORING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CHURCH

FOUNTAIN SQUARE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: CONNECTING
WITH AN EVER-CHANGING COMMUNITY

A CREATIVE PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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Abstract

Creative Project: Exploring Community Development within the Church

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This project was created to assist Fountain Square Presbyterian Church (FSPC) in assessing how they currently engage with the Fountain Square community and in what ways they could intentionally engage and be a more integrated part of the surrounding community in part to combat individualism and isolation by fostering relationship-building between the church and the community. The final product is an assessment which shows the ways FSPC, as a whole and as individual members, is currently involved with their community on a daily basis, an evaluation of the assets and opportunities within the community, and some of the resources of the congregation and how these can be matched to benefit both the church and surrounding community. The findings also include best practices for other community-based churches who would be interested in a similar process to undertake themselves.

Acknowledgments

This project morphed over time, as many projects do, from the idea that was in my head, to working with a real population in a neighborhood, looking to do something similar to the project I was looking to help start or move towards the finish line. Along the way, many individuals and groups worked with me to offer pieces of advice and ideas leading up to the final product.

It was essential for my development as a community developer and writer to have talked with Ron Greiner and Matt Cutler from Mission Indy, Inc. (interview in the appendix, A-1) early on to help frame the story, Casey Scott at Chapel Rock Christian Church, and various members of Englewood Christian Church along the way, who have taught me so much in my two and a half years of working there. This background was helpful in understanding some ways that organizations with differing goals and member bases have approached this type of work before to varying degrees and in different aspects.

Settling on Fountain Square Presbyterian Church, I am thankful to have the help of Mark Vanest and the rest of the elder's group for allowing me to work with and engage the congregation throughout this process. I am also grateful to the various small group leaders for allowing me to interview their groups and for all the contributors to the conversation – it is deeply appreciated. I will be working with this group and congregation going forward in putting this plan in place at Fountain Square Presbyterian.

I am especially thankful to the Ball State University Urban Planning Program for setting me up with the practical research, writing, and synthesis skills to be able to produce this creative project. Most specifically, I could not have started, much less completed, this creative project, without the help of my advisor, Scott Truex. The advice, direction, and support to pursue this

project and determine how it could be practically helpful to a group of people were essential and irreplaceable.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Mack and Amanda Overton, for all their support throughout this entire process, from believing in me, so much so that they put me through college at Ball State University, to encouraging me to pursue urban planning and community development, to softly (and sometimes not-so-softly) pushing me to finish my thesis in a timely manner (which was semi-successful). Thank you for everything and I could not have done it without you!

Statement of the Creative Project

Topic: Equipping Fountain Square Presbyterian Church in the Fountain Square neighborhood in Indianapolis to have a more intentional presence in their community by realizing both the needs and abilities of those around them and how the resources of this congregation can be more strategically utilized to address those needs and strengthen the opportunities. This will further integrate the church into the community, in part, to combat individualism and isolation within the community by fostering relationship building between the church members and the community. A common goal of many churches in the United States is to serve their community; many have programs and funds set up to help the community whenever possible. Churches also have varying methods to address issues in the community: some give monetarily to other community-serving organizations, others run food pantries; still, others run a preschool or school. Their decisions often depend on their available resources -- monetary, social, political, etc. -- and how they allocate them. Some churches are effective and intentional about how they use their resources while others struggle with the targeted use of resources. Many churches are simply not equipped on where or how to start this process of engaging with the community or do not know the community well enough to know how to help in a way that benefits both parties. By relying on the talents of their congregation (the social, economic, and social capital), intentionally engaging with the surrounding community, and focusing on asset-based community development – defined as “a strategy that starts with what is present in the community, the capacities of its residents and workers, the associational and institutional base of the area” (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993, p. 9) — churches can leverage resources to integrate the church into the community to, in part, combat individualism and isolation within the community, by fostering relationship building between the church members and the community. Integrating the church

into the community would look like the church (as a whole and as individual members) taking on responsibility for what happens in the community and offering assistance and solutions, alongside other players in the community, for how to increase quality of life in this particular place and time as well as setting a working relationship with other players in the community going forward.

This creative project will equip a specific urban church in Indianapolis (Fountain Square Presbyterian) to have a more intentional presence in their community. I will research what scholars determine as “effective” in terms of congregations engaging with their communities. Then I will interview various leaders and attendees of Fountain Square Presbyterian (FSP) with some questions determined below and assess their strengths and weaknesses as a group in connecting to and interacting with the community. The final product will be an assessment which shows the ways that FSP is currently involved with their community, an evaluation of the assets and opportunities within the community (both from the attendees’ perspective and through data), and some of the social, intellectual, and economic resources of their congregation. I will then show how they can match these two components to serve the surrounding residents better and become more effective in what they already do. The assessment will also include “next steps” to help them keep moving forward.

This creative project has a pragmatic worldview: the topic is problem-centered and practice-oriented as the final product will be an assessment church leaders can use. I will use mixed methods to interview people and engage in participatory action research by attending this church and engaging with the community. The process of data collection will be exploratory sequential, so I can ask general questions to a few people in the congregation and community first (qualitative data collection) and then ask more specific questions to a broader group of people in

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the church and community (quantitative data collection). The general questions will be conversation oriented, allowing people to discuss their time in the community, how they have seen it evolve and grow over time, and if the church has changed with the neighborhood or remained the same. Other methods of data collection will include a literature review about community resources in regards to churches and observations from churches and service-based organizations around Indianapolis.

Planning Background

Capacities of the Researcher

I, as the researcher, would like to set out my motives behind this creative project and what my personal qualities are, which may have influenced the project and its process. I first became interested in this topic when I had an internship with Englewood Community Development Corporation in Indianapolis. This community development corporation is associated with Englewood Christian Church and is focused upon creating a better quality of place in their community by engaging their neighbors in the process as a faith-based organization. This was a new concept to me, and I became interested in pursuing them further and seeking out other organizations that had similar ideas or tendencies in the Indianapolis area. This brought me to a creative project to encourage churches to become more conscious about how they are affecting their surrounding community. This includes how they identify their community, how they market themselves and whom they market themselves to, what resources are used and in what capacity in the community, and how they (each member of the congregation) interact with those in their community on a day-to-day basis.

Since the subjects of religion and community are often very personal, I would like to set out my personal biases, which may have influenced this project so the reader can get a better understanding of where this project is coming from and the purpose behind my research. I grew up in an evangelical, non-denominational Christian church and have been connected to the church since then as my family still attends there. Although I am connected to the Christian church (as an overall religion, not the Christian Church denomination), I have been working hard to make sure this does not affect my synthesis of the churches and how they interact with their community. The intent of this project is to show how religious organizations in general, such as specific churches in Indianapolis, have an impact – negative or positive – on their surrounding

community and to make readers of this project aware of what those impacts can be and suggestions for how these churches could look at new ways to engage with their communities. I am also from Indianapolis, so I am personally connected to the site under review in a broad capacity and currently work for Englewood Community Development Corporation and live on the near eastside of Indianapolis while attending Fountain Square Presbyterian Church as my home church.

The Problem and Parameters Guiding a Solution

The problem which I am looking to address here by working with Fountain Square Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis is that the local Church, one which was started as a collective organization and one which valued community and a community spirit in the early centuries of its existence, has shifted to more of an individualistic endeavor specifically in American society. This is parallel to American individualism and consumerism prevalent today (Sparks, Soerens, & Friesen, 2014, p. 24) (Smith & Pattison, 2014, pp. 158-159). Though this does not apply to everyone or all churches, many of which I am aware of and have researched have these tendencies. “The Western world keeps people from seeing that their concerns are commonly held by focusing on them through the lens of the privatized individual” (Sparks, Soerens, & Friesen, 2014, p. 96). This is true for people in general and organizations, such as the local church. But, there are many ways in which churches can still be connected to their communities to combat this individualism and isolation.

Seeing common issues in the surrounding community, whether that is at the regional, city, or neighborhood level, and finding solutions is one thing that can connect community development and the church. This is how I want to offer my training as an urban planner and community developer to church congregations in Indianapolis. Many churches want to be influential in their surrounding communities and combat the individualism and ways people are siloed in society

currently but are unaware of how to begin or how to use their resources most effectively. A common thought around this issue is that “God is doing greater things in a community over there than He is in my community here” (Sparks, Soerens, & Friesen, 2014, p. 66) as it is often easier to see the needs of people in other parts of the country and other countries as more important than getting to know the needs of one’s own community. Without outside intervention and assistance, it can be challenging to see the opportunities and assets available in one’s neighborhood, community, or city. This is where planning, asset mapping, and finding appropriate solutions to the issues can come into the practice with these organizations. The parameters to guide this solution are very constrained. Still, the goal will be to give the church I will be working with (Fountain Square Presbyterian Church) an assessment of how they are already working within and being present in their physical community by talking with their church staff, those affiliated with the church, and observing their day-to-day interactions with the community. Following this up will be an in-depth assessment of “next-steps” this church can take which would increase their level of involvement and investment in the surrounding community including making them aware of some initiatives going on around them and how they can use their unique talents and assets to match up with the assets and opportunities in their surrounding community.

Christian churches (as an overall religion of Christianity, not the Christian Church denomination), similar to many other religious communities, were first and foremost a societal amenity when they first started over 2,000 years ago. Services were held in people’s homes, and, as they grew, they were at the center of town as a community gathering space. “Religious structures of all types have traditionally played an important role in city building. Think of the cathedrals that formed the nucleus of European market towns, the mosques of Middle Eastern

cities, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, and the simple white frame churches in New England towns” (Culbertson, 2011). This has changed significantly over the years as the physical layout of cities has changed even just within the United States, and when the suburbs grew exponentially in the 1940s and 50s after World War II, churches were not at the center of towns and developments anymore. This shift in the physical development of cities along with the fact that church attendance has been declining over the past 20 years at least calls for a change to how churches market to the people whom they want to bring into their congregations. “Among the defining trends affecting change is waning church attendance. Although 53 percent of Americans believe religion to be very important in their lives, only 43 percent say they attend church nearly every week (according to the Hartford Institute for Religious Research). Other reports reflect an even lower number in overall church attendance. According to Census Bureau records, 18 percent of Americans reported frequent church attendance, down from 20.5 percent in 1995” (Daniels, 2012).

There have been many different responses to this statistic and the belief that Christian churches are not mandatory in many American communities anymore. The contact many people have with a church is not on a day-to-day basis, but once a week, maybe twice if people are very dedicated. But, according to Kurt Culbertson on the American Planning Association’s website: “Churches, synagogues, mosques — they all provide benefits that go beyond religion. In planning terms, they are major elements of sustainable neighborhoods. They are fundamental to the way community residents socialize, share values, provide charitable outreach, and perform community service” (Culbertson, 2011). So how can churches become more integrated into a sustainable neighborhood and be a place for socialization to combat individualism within society and provide outreach and community service?

There is not an answer which is evident across the board, and one of the main reasons for this is the difference in size and location of churches. When they first began up until the 1940s and 50s, churches were small neighborhood amenities, and those who lived in that neighborhood attended that church. Now, there are churches that range from a small neighborhood congregation to a megachurch with multiple satellite campuses. Everyone is looking for something different in a church, and there are options for everyone. Some churches have turned to more specialized programs for youth, young adults, seniors, etc. to bring more people into the church on a more regular basis while others have focused on their worship performances, while others have focused on bringing the community in and offering a wide variety of services in the church building. Megachurches are a significant part of this conversation as “according to the American Sociological Association, megachurches are gaining dominant ground in the religious landscape, with more than half of American churchgoers now attending the largest 10 percent of churches” (Daniels, 2012). These congregations of more than 2,000 attendees often have compelling worship services akin to a concert, coffee bars, kid’s programs, and even retail areas. This is a crucial time for churches as they think about who their target audience is and how best to reach them, not unlike many other community organizations and businesses. Other factors include the declining population of young people who opt to attend church or who are religious, the trend toward online church services, and individualistic ideals. “The world is changing rapidly. Internal and external forces are continually impacting both traditional and non-traditional churches. And, although that change is sometimes resisted as churches strive to maintain traditional modes of operation, many churches are viewing this new era as an opportunity to discover new strategies, new focus, and new energy” (Daniels, 2012). It is essential to note the growing draw to megachurches and how they impact the landscape of church attendance in the

United States because of how they attract people from many different areas and bring them under one building in an often neutral location (not tied to a neighborhood, etc.). All this is important to keep in mind but not what I will be focusing on in this creative project. My focus will be with neighborhood churches who are attached to a place and are attempting to focus on that neighborhood location and, in this instance, one specific neighborhood church, Fountain Square Presbyterian Church. So how, as churches are looking at new strategies, focus areas, energy, and concentrating their efforts on staying afloat in a shifting culture, can they maintain good relationships with their surrounding communities and positively identify, engage with, and impact their community?

Literature Review

Community: The Structure of Belonging by Peter Block

Block, P. (2008). *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett Publishers, Inc.

The primary concern of the book is filling the need for belonging as not just a personal struggle for connection, but also a community problem. Individual transformation is the more popular conversation, but the “transformation of large numbers of individuals does not result in the transformation of communities” (page 5). Block focuses on a couple of aspects of the community, such as hospitality, generosity, and isolation. He defines hospitality as the “welcoming of strangers,” generosity as “an offer with no expectation of return,” and states that isolation is correlated directly with fear. These statements line up with what the Slow Church authors discuss below.

Block structures his book by first discussing the community holistically, what makes up a community, and some of the differences between what has been done by communities in the past to “fix problems” that may not have worked so well and what has been done well by other communities. He then focuses on what needs to take place within a community, although this can apply to a church community, smaller-scale neighborhood, business, school, etc. He finally gets very specific and discusses some integral issues related to community, such as inviting people in, making sure the physical space is welcoming and being generous with others – answering the questions/definitions he stated at the beginning of the book.

According to Peter Block, communal transformation does occur when we focus on the structure of how we gather and the context in which our gatherings take place. This is a success in and of itself. “All this needs to be followed up with the usual actions and problem solving, but it is in

those moments when citizens engage one another, in communion and the witness of others, that something collective shifts” (page 75). Transformation also occurs when we work hard on getting the questions right as the questions are often more important than the answers, and finally, when we choose depth over speed and relatedness over scale. “Belonging requires the courage to set aside our usual notions of action and measuring success by the numbers touched. It also means that while we keep our point of view, we leave our self-interest at the door and show up to learn rather than to advocate” (page 76).

This book is helpful to my research because it addresses the lens through which many different groups of people look at the community now and how they are currently divided. This includes the dualities found with community activists and developers, political powers and citizens, church congregations and their neighbors, etc. The author states that by shifting views and contexts which these people work within and see the world, there will be more commonalities and similarities found, allowing people to be more willing to work together as opposed to working against one another. This author emphasizes the power in community and those within the community and that, again, focusing on their assets as opposed to their deficiencies as well as taking ownership for one’s community instead of passing it off to others will work to change the way we converse with one another and look for solutions to age-old problems such as poverty, community participation, isolation, racism, and social activism.

How Places of Worship Help Build Community by Kurt Culbertson

Culbertson, K. (2011, February). How Places of Worship Help Build Community. *American*

Planning Association: <https://www.planning.org/planning/2011/feb/viewpoint.htm>.

Accessed 2 October 2016.

This article focuses specifically on places of worship (churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.) and how they are dealt with in the planning and community development world. The author discusses the necessity of these organizations to create “sustainable neighborhoods” and how they perform community services and socialization for residents. He also discusses some of the hardships of including places of worship in plans and why some developers choose not to. Including local congregations in plans though is both directly and indirectly beneficial to a neighborhood, he concludes.

Today's Changing Church by Stanley L. Daniels

Daniels, S. L. (2012, November). Today's Changing Church. *American Planning Association*:

<https://www.planning.org/planning/2012/nov/changingchurch.htm>. Accessed 2 October 2016.

This article references sizes of churches (local churches versus megachurches) and some assets and drawbacks of each and locations of churches both in the past and present. Its main point is the purpose of churches and how that is changing now to a community space for people to gather for more than just church services since many now have “coffee bars, cafes and retail stores”. The population they are targeting is changing and this also affects what churches focus on and how this is reflected in and around their buildings. This article broadly covers that fact that churches are changing to reach out to their communities and I will dive more into how some

local churches in Indianapolis are doing this and how some can do it better (more effectively, efficiently, purposefully, etc.)

Greiner, R. M. (2016, February 16). Mission Indy. (A. Overton, Interviewer)

Mission Indy began in 1996 and grew out of a vision to support local churches and help them grow to “be all they can be” in the Indianapolis landscape. Those starting Mission Indy, a group out of Chapel Rock Christian Church, recognized that many non-profit organizations would get partnerships with other churches who will fund/support their work (and often they were inner-city organizations partnering with suburban churches). Still, there were not many churches who would partner with other churches to further their seemingly similar goals. Even those in the same general vicinity seem to be “siloe” and have a specific niche they focus on as a church and congregation but not something they want another church coming in and being a part of Mission Indy’s premise is that it encourages church Sunday School groups, portions of congregations, youth groups, or school groups come to spend a week with Mission Indy. This week consists of staying in a different “host” church than they are used to, and during the day going out into the community around the host church and serving members of the congregation or people, the church knows need help with something. Often it involves painting, yard work, or even hanging out with kids during the day at a preschool or something. In the evening, there is always a time for the groups participating in the program to come back together and discuss what they learned during the day and to brainstorm how they can take what they’re learning and apply it to their home community. This is the key part of the week and what Mission Indy wants to emphasize: the ability to have the church groups who are partnering and serving with another church for the

week through Mission Indy to take what they are learning and experiencing and apply that to everyday situations in their home communities.

Some roadblocks which Mission Indy has determined from this program are other churches trying to get them to do other things that they think is better for the area and not wanting to step on any toes. Many churches do not even know the full assets of their congregation or take for granted some things which could be used to help the community, including social and intellectual resources, skills and talents of the congregation, etc. Additionally, many people do not want to take the time to spend with each other to figure out how to help one another. It takes time to get to know people, and this is one thing they try to emphasize. When there is no time or effort made to connect to other congregations and organizations who are working towards the same goals, this can lead to independence and self-sufficiency. This, in turn, leads to a waste of money and an overlap of services across the city. Many organizations duplicate services because they also want to get the credit and recognition which others are receiving for the work they are doing. This is another roadblock to churches collaborating in the first place.

Through the Mission Indy program, most groups get a week at most to get to know the church they are serving and the community members who just gives them a glimpse into the community and how they operate. Even the summer interns only get ten weeks, and this is also not enough time to really get to know others. This is why there is such an emphasis on taking what they learn during the program and applying it to their home communities where they already have relationships, where they already have places they frequent, people they know could use help and people and organizations which have things to offer for the good of the community but just need partners and people with a vision to help put it into action.

*Planning in Neighborhoods with Multiple Publics: Opportunities and Challenges for
Community-Based Nonprofit Organizations* by Tarry Hum

Hum, T. (2010, April 20). Planning in Neighborhoods with Multiple Publics: Opportunities and Challenges for Community-Based Nonprofit Organizations. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 461-477. doi:10.1177/0739456X11431574. Accessed 3 October 2016.

This article is focused on how local non-profits can be and should be a more significant player in community development, neighborhood ordeals, and specifically race relations in two diverse New York City neighborhoods. While this is different from my topic, the ideas are similar and can be used to help further my topic. While Indianapolis is not New York City in terms of diversity, there are some parts of Indianapolis which are relatively diverse and continuing to diversify. The individual relations between these groups of people is hard to reconcile on a large scale, but on a community organization/ non-profit scale, it is more attainable. This article is also similar because it studies two neighborhoods and compares them, as I am interested in doing, and does lots of qualitative analysis of the local organizations and surveys of residents and members of these organizations as I would like to as well. This article is focused on building community by using local assets through non-profit organizations in a city's diverse neighborhoods, and I believe I can glean much more from this article,, which pertains to my topic.

From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development by Alison Mathie and Gord Cunningham

Mathie, A., & Cunningham, G. (2003, November). From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development.

Development in Practice 13, no. 5, 474-486. JSTOR. Accessed 26 September 2016.

This article from 2003 explains asset-based community development in regards to citizen engagement and treating people like assets to the community with skills to offer instead of people who have to be helped by outside organizations. The authors of this journal draw heavily on the ideas from Jody Kretzman and John McKnight, who have written extensively about the ideas that people can take charge of their communities by using asset-based community development (ABCD) as a strategy for development. They examined four different elements of ABCD, including appreciative inquiry, social capital, economic development theory, and distribution of power, as well as some challenges of ABCD.

This article is helpful to my research because it gives background to how many churches use their social capital. Churches run different programs, both internally and externally, and rely on the skills of the people in their congregation to make those programs work. They often operate like a small community. Asset-based community development focuses on the strength of the people within the community and not the institutions outside of the community who do not know the community. This is the same with churches—they emphasize the strength of the people in their congregation and the positive effect they can have on the community around them.

Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus by C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison

Smith, C. C., & Pattison, J. (2014). *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press.

Slow Church examines the way that high-speed technology and culture has infiltrated society and has even crept into the structure and practices of the local church. The authors take the themes of food, place, ecology, rest, economy, hospitality, and others and delve into what the church has historically said about these themes and how these themes have changed with the fast, high speed, and rapid “McDonaldization” of American culture. They emphasize the importance of stability, sense of place, and time spent with people in the church and in the surrounding community. This book has a community development theme as they discuss asset-based community development and valuing people in a different way than recent society has taught people to value others; not in the sense of productivity or efficiency but in the sense that everyone has different gifts that can be used for the good of the community.

Slow Church is a pivotal book in terms of this creative project and discusses many parts of society which the church should take into consideration, though this list is not exhaustive, as well as offering questions to ponder, which would be helpful when interviewing Fountain Square Presbyterian.

Place: Place refers to the contrast between mobility and stability and the fascination especially recently with the ability for people to move freely from place to place, and with that, churches have a heightened sense of mobility. “The increase in mobility led to a shift in the organizing principle of churches. For centuries, proximity was paramount. People went to the church that was closest to their home-or they attended the church that met in their home! But with the rise of

the automobile, the choice became primary” (page 65). Since churches are now based on choice, not on proximity, there has been a shift change – churches now cater to the demographic or population they are trying to attract, not just the neighbors around their building. These authors make the point that stability is something that is learned, something that involves staying in a place, getting to know that place and the people around, the rhythms of that place, and that through this, one (individually and as a church congregation) can truly come to love and serve the place one is in. It is much more difficult to accomplish this when the main goal of the church is attracting people from outside the neighborhood and from not getting to know the place one is in on a regular basis.

Reconciliation: From the Christian perspective, God created the entire universe and everything in it to work together as a dependent whole, not independent parts, and this is shown in day to day life, and throughout history, as choices, we as humans have made have unforeseen consequences down the road. The authors urge the readers to notice this interconnectedness and take it into consideration in our everyday lives. The opposite of this is to follow the trajectory of the world and “lose sight of this narrative and to narrow our focus” (page 102). Nationalities, politics, social standing, economics, and a plethora of other things divide people in the church and keep it from serving people wholly and fully.

Abundance: Abundance and its opposing force, scarcity, shows how the world lives in a scarcity model, even in Christianity. This model is detrimental to the way we interact with each other. The scarcity model expands to churches—it becomes a group of people who are living in a scarcity model that hurts the church and what it was originally supposed to be (a place of abundance and generosity). As many churches have less funding and smaller budgets, their answer is to cut spending and let staff go instead of widening the lens of the assets available to a

church through their congregation and neighborhood and increasing the abundance side of their work. This model connects to which churches are surviving today. As the urban core and first ring of suburbs has been vacated over the past half-century or so, many of the churches in these areas become too small to become sustainable, especially in a scarcity model. “Sustaining smaller churches with shrinking congregations is a major challenge for most mainline denominations...However we suspect that if we took God’s abundance seriously, most churches could be sustainable” (page 169). The authors argue that there are many ways outside the offering plate to make churches sustainable and to live in an abundance mentality as opposed to a scarcity mentality. Some of these include renting out space in the church facility to other organizations, harnessing talents of the congregation for things such as cleaning the church themselves or performing other tasks that are usually done by paid staff. The authors make the argument that individuals and churches are stuck in this scarcity model because we do not use our imaginations widely enough. There are plenty of talents, skills, and passions which individuals have, and collectively, people who spend time together have, which are not used to their fullest potential for which God has provided. Many churches stick to the contemporary Western model of a church that separates the church from most other uses throughout the other six days of the week. By integrating the church more naturally into everyday life, the church becomes more sustainable, and people are provided for through an abundance model, not a scarcity model.

Gratitude: This bridges abundance and generosity/hospitality – churches can see their abundance as discussed above, be thankful for it and whom it came from, and then redistribute it to other church groups, neighbors, its members, and the community in general. “The whole foundation of the universe rests on this central attribute of God’s character: God gives because it is God’s

nature to give” (page 175). The idea of “slow church” is in direct contrast to this trend in American culture. The “slow church” holds that there are enough resources for everyone if we see the abundance God has given, are grateful for it, but do not hold onto it and are generous with what we have been given. “Dissatisfaction is also connected to some of the more subtle forces, like hypermobility, that undermines our neighborhoods, communities, and churches” (page 182). This type of thinking also contributes to Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). When we focus on what we *lack*, there will never be enough; we will always be searching for more. When we focus on what we *have*, it is easier to see how much there is to be grateful for.

Hospitality: Generosity and hospitality are linked and come when we recognize the true abundance we have been given, are grateful for these good things which ultimately come from God and are not given in a scarcity model, and then are able to redistribute them to people who are in need. Hospitality was something which was prevalent in the Old and New Testament days and which is spoken about in detail throughout the Bible. This is especially true in terms of strangers, and Christine Pohl speaks about this in her book *Making Room*. “Pohl describes how Israel’s code of hospitality included a special mention of resident aliens, making provisions for their welfare and gradually folding them permanently into the life of the people” (page 195). Today it has a much different connotation as hospitality no longer refers to a stranger as much as it does an industry that is prevalent in the United States and around the world today. There is not a perfect outcome that comes out of hospitality, something to show for the effort and time put into a relationship with someone but is essential to human relationships both individually and corporately, according to the authors.

This book is helpful in my research because it gives an overview of some of the important themes which the church is presently concerned with and how they can be dealt within the context of today's society. This can help me pick some of the themes I find interesting (food, place, economy, asset-based-community development, etc.), which are also relevant to the church and dive further into them with the specific churches I'll be talking with. These themes are also interesting to the general public and planning culture in general but not always through the lens of the church or religious community. This gives validity to the theme of the project because it is something that the general public desires, longs for, and works towards, but not always from a Christian or church-centered perspective. Slow Church offers suggestions and solutions to common issues from a certain worldview. From here, I can research some of these themes more in-depth and focus on them for my surveys and interviews with the Indianapolis community.

Project Description

I have chosen one church congregation in the Fountain Square neighborhood (southeast side) of Indianapolis to interview and assess how they currently interact with their community and use the social, economic, and cultural capital of their congregation to engage with and improve the community around them, specifically by combatting individualism, addressing isolation, and fostering relationship-building within the community. The interviews and assessment will help determine in what areas they believe they might lack or how they are not able to engage with the community and some ways they might be able to use their resources to engage with their surrounding community more effectively. Fountain Square Presbyterian Church is about six years old, is passionate about this topic, and has talked about this before but is now moving forward with developing a formal strategy as to how they can be more integrated into the neighborhood for combatting individualism and isolation and fostering relationship-building within the community for both congregation members and surrounding neighbors.

This church was chosen for several reasons, one of which is the writer is particularly interested in how the church determines to work with their surrounding community as she currently attends this particular congregation and will be able to help follow-through with recommendations and continue with additional interviewing and asset-mapping within the congregation. Additionally, FSP is internally determining how they, as a church body, can be more effective in the Fountain Square community in Indianapolis, especially as Fountain Square Presbyterian Church is dealing with a unique set of issues as their neighborhood is quickly becoming more affluent and has been, anecdotally, displacing long-time residents of the neighborhood and those who cannot keep up with the rising home values (Appendix A-3 for Median Assessed Value). Fountain Square Presbyterian is a local church – many of their regular attendees either live in the Fountain Square

neighborhood (see map below) or in a surrounding neighborhood. This can drastically affect the way the congregation interacts with the neighborhood and informs how Fountain Square Presbyterian will plan to interact within the neighborhood. Neither FSP nor the church which planted them six years ago, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, are a megachurch —defined as a church with more than 2,000 attendees — therefore, there is a fairly limited pool of people and resources to draw on for support, monetary and otherwise. Finally, FSP, unlike many other churches, does not own its own building but utilizes the Southeast Community Services building at 901 S Shelby Street (see photos below), which has other organizations and services in this building during the week. This makes the church less visible to the community on a regular basis as there is not a particular location for FSP to be present in the neighborhood during the week. Instead, the congregation has to use other people's homes and community spaces to have events, studies, and meet with other people.

The project process started with interviewing leadership from FSP (the Elder's Team and a few other interested individuals) for direction and initial ideas as to what they believed will be gathered from this, putting together a proposal, and deciding upon a method of interviewing. Survey questions were vetted by this group as well. Below is a "long" survey draft, which encompasses all the questions the writer was hoping to ask or hopes to ask in follow-up interviews or parts of the project. Many of these questions were taken from Peter Block's book *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. These questions look at a number of essential aspects of neighborhood development, asset-based community development, addressing social, political, economic capital, and looking at ways individuals are currently detached or isolated from society or a community. These questions were narrowed down to their final form, shown in the Summary and Conclusions section below. Subsequently, interviews were scheduled with each of

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the church's six "community groups." These are groups of 5-7 families who meet once a week outside of Sundays at one of the group member's homes. The interviews began with the first group in May of 2018 and concluded in November of 2018. The writer attended one community group session with each of the groups. These interviews were recorded as the writer asked questions of the general group, and various people responded from each group. The writer took notes during the interview and after the in-person interview, listened to the recording to ensure that all the information was correct. The same questions were asked in each interview session throughout all groups, with the exception of a few of the follow-up questions that were asked in the last community group the writer visited. These additional questions asked of the last community group will help inform the second round of questions to continue to hone in on and specify Fountain Square Presbyterian's involvement in their surrounding community.

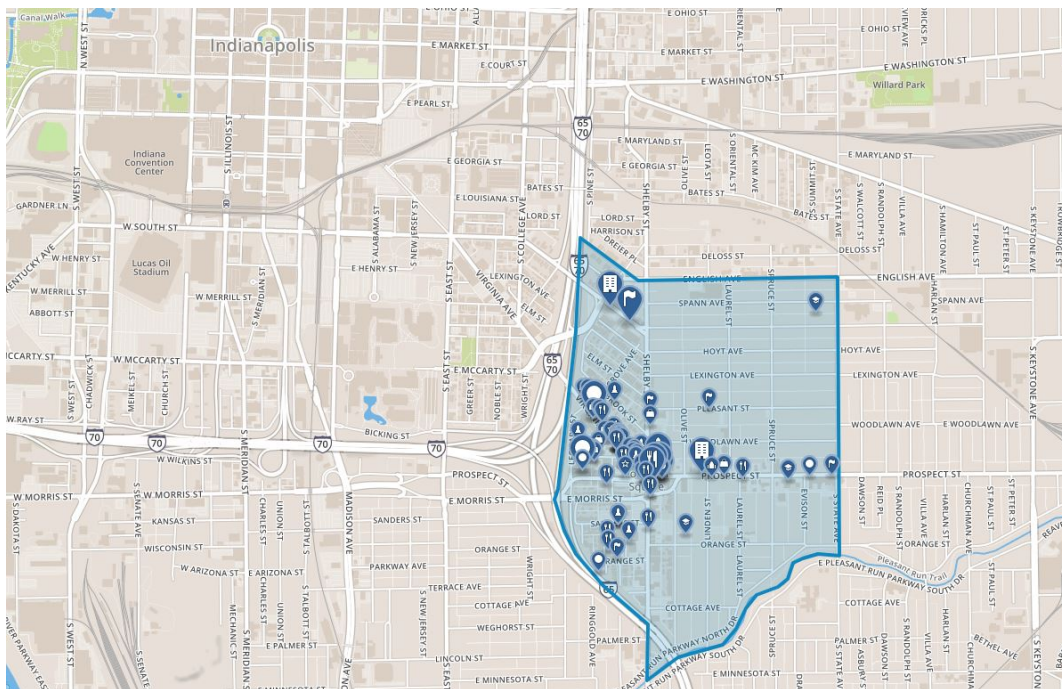


Image 1: The Fountain Square Neighborhood in relationship to the City of Indianapolis. Bounded by English Avenue on the north, Interstate 65 on the west, Pleasant Run Parkway South Drive on the south and State Avenue on the east. Source: <https://www.downtownindy.org/neighborhoods/fountain-square/>

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Image 2 (left): The west façade of the Southeast Community Services Building at 901 S Shelby Street, in the Fountain Square neighborhood. Fountain Square Presbyterian Church has a banner to put over the signage fronting the road to denote the church's presence once a week.

Source:

<https://fountainsquarepres.org/about/>

Image 3 (below): The south façade of the Southeast Community Services building showing logos of the various organizations that are in the building during the week (not including FSPC). Source:

<https://www.immigrantwelcomecenter.org/places/esl-classes/southeast-community-services-center/>



Long Survey Draft

Goals of surveying the congregation:

To assess how Fountain Square Presbyterian, as a church body, currently interacts with their community.

To determine the assets and passions of the congregation, which will further inform the strategy of community engagement in Fountain Square Presbyterian.

To determine where they believe they might lack or how they are not able to engage with the community currently.

To identify and map some of the assets and opportunities within the greater Fountain Square community.

To discover ways they might be able to more effectively use their resources (social, economic, and cultural) to engage with their surrounding community.

Possible questions for the congregation-wide survey:

- *What are some ways you currently interact with people in the greater Fountain Square community on a daily basis?*
 - o *Example: do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.*
- What their goals are – whom they are marketing to, and why, how they measure results, benchmarks, etc.
- How they came to this way of engaging with their surrounding community, history, etc.
- Where they currently see weaknesses, what some of the trade-offs are, etc.
- How does your organization define their neighborhood or community?

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- Is it defined by physical boundaries, school district boundaries, political boundaries?
- Is this an area where the congregation resides in or more of an outreach area? Or both?
- *How does Fountain Square Pres define its community? By physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, or something else?*
- What are some ways the organization currently reaches the self-defined community?
 - Specific programs, outreach days, community gatherings, service projects, etc.?
 - What are the ways these things are defined as successful? Increased attendance at church? Inclusion in community activities? New relationships formed? Increased use of a food/ clothing pantry?
- What is the perceived role of the organization in the self-defined community?
 - Has this changed over time and the history of the organization?
 - As the area has changed (demographically, physically, politically), has the role of the organization organically or intentionally changed?
 - *What changes have you seen in your community in the past five years?*
 - *What changes have been positive?*
 - *What has been negative?*
- In what ways has the organization tried to connect with the community and not been able to?
- What percentage of the members of the organization/ congregation live within:
 - .5 mile away?
 - 1 mile away?

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- 5 or more miles away?
- *How far away do you live from where the church is currently located at 901 S Shelby?*
 - .5 miles away
 - 1 mile away
 - 2 miles away
 - 3 or more miles away
- Does this seem to have an impact (positive or negative) on the ability of the organization to reach out and connect with their self-defined community?
- *What are some of the issues you see in your (church) community?*
 - *For example poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.*
- *What are some resources you have which could help address these issues?*
- *What are some barriers to addressing these issues?*
- What are the churches within x miles of your location/within the neighborhood or area of focus? How can you collaborate with them?
 - *What connections do you have at other churches?*
- What organizations or third places are within x miles of your location/within the neighborhood or area of focus? How can you collaborate with them?
 - *What are some of your favorite third places? (coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, etc.) What opportunities for collaboration exist here?*
- What are some of the fragmentations that exist in your congregation? Race? Age? Economic class? Political party? How can you engage on either side of these divides?

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- *What are some of the fragmentations that exist around you – racial divide, age differences, cultural backgrounds, mobility, etc. – and how can these start to be sorted through.*
- How can you nurture more of these opportunities for healing and reconciliation to begin?
- What is your congregational process for decision making? How do you ensure that as many people as possible can speak into the decision-making process if they so desire?
- What gifts and skills do people in your congregation have that they are willing to make available for the reconciling work of the kingdom?
 - What are you passionate about?
 - What skills or gifts do you have?
 - How could these be used to further the kingdom of God?
 - How might these skills be used in collaboration with others in Fountain Square to make something new?
- How can you connect people with particular skills that would benefit your neighborhood and empower people to begin exploring how they can use their gifts together in this way?
- What resources does your church have in the gifts and skills of your members or in your land and buildings that could be leveraged to benefit the well-being of your congregation or your neighbors?
 - What resources does the church as an organization have that could be used for the benefit of the community? (economic resources, a structured order, regular meetings, social resources, etc.)

Summary and Conclusions

Fountain Square Presbyterian Mercy Ministry Community Group Discussions

Goals:

To assess how we currently interact with our community and use our social, economic, and cultural resources to engage with and improve the community around us.

To determine where we believe we might lack or what some barriers to engaging with the community might be.

To more effectively use our resources to engage with our surrounding community.

To determine an effective structure for serving those within our congregation and surrounding community.

Community Group Questions:

- How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?
 - o i.e., physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.
- What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?
 - o i.e., do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.
- What are some things you enjoy about the community?
- What are some of your favorite third places in the community?
 - o i.e., coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. What opportunities for collaboration exist here?

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- What are some of the issues you see in the community?
 - o i.e., poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.
- What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?
- What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?
 - o What changes have been positive?
 - o What has been negative?

Follow Up Questions

- How might these skills be used in collaboration with others in Fountain Square to make something new?
- How can you connect people with particular skills that would benefit the community and empower people to begin exploring how they can use their gifts together in this way?
- What resources does Fountain Square Presbyterian have in the gifts and skills of the members that could be used to benefit the well-being of your congregation or your neighbors?
 - o What resources does the church as an organization have that could be used for the benefit of the community? (economic resources, a structured order, regular meetings, social resources, etc.)
- What are some of the resources Fountain Square Pres would need to address these issues which we've discussed?

Individual Questions

- How far away (approximately) do you live from where the church is currently located at 901 S Shelby?
 - o Less than .5 mile away

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- .5 mile - 1 mile away
- 1- 2 miles away
- 2 or more miles away

After hearing your community group discuss these topics and issues, how might your specific skills, gifts, and passions be used within the church community and the larger Fountain Square community? Are you passionate about immigrants, children, the elderly, the outcast, students, the homeless, those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, etc.? Are you passionate about the environment, art, specific cultures, music, etc.? How can these be used with others' passions to come up with practical skills?

- What are you passionate about?
- What skills or gifts do you have, and how could these be used to further the kingdom of God through Mercy Ministries at FSP?

Synthesis of Responses from Community Groups at FSPC

1. **Observation of the small groups:** These groups, though all from the same church body, focus on some different neighborhoods in the area. The Aalsma's seems to focus on Garfield Park neighborhood, the Sinsabaugh's seems to focus on Fountain Square, the Vanest's seems to focus on Bates-Hendricks, the Hickmans' seems to focus on Fountain Square, the Pumphrey's seems to focus on Fountain Square but some input of Beech Grove and the Kobe's seems to focus on Fletcher Place but also south Indy (around UIndy)
2. **Community Definition:** Fountain Square Presbyterian was planted intentionally to be a neighborhood-specific church that is different from its parent church, Redeemer Presbyterian. These neighborhoods are generally accepted by most groups as Fountain Square, Fletcher Place, Bates-Hendricks, and Garfield Park. More generally, it's the southeast side of Indianapolis. This is the self-defined "community" for Fountain Square Presbyterian, where they would like to focus much of their outreach and community-based efforts. This does not mean all their church attendees come from these neighborhoods or need to come from these neighborhoods, but it is where the church is planted and intends to stay, even though there are not many available buildings in the area. The community, more than just the neighborhoods they serve or want to serve, are people that are in a relationship with the people in the church - neighbors that congregation members are in regular relationship or conversation with are important to the core of the church and emphasizing community to combat individualism in the current structure of society.

It is generally accepted that the demographics of the church body do not represent the demographics of the neighborhood(s) or community. Overwhelmingly the church

congregation is white, affluent, and educated. The influx of population into the southeast part of Indianapolis and the four neighborhoods mentioned above is also white and educated, but the general population and the historical population is much more diverse. To combat individualism in the community, there is a general consensus that there should be more diversity – socio-economic, racial, and otherwise, within the church congregation. Several ideas on how to focus on this are discussed below.

Finally, many see the schools as communities within the church as they are the hub of activity for many of the children within the church. Some of the schools mentioned in this process are Herron High School, the Oaks, IPS Super School, and SENSE Charter School. These are also areas where Fountain Square Presbyterian is invested in serving and building community even though several of them are outside of the neighborhoods mentioned above.

3. How the congregation currently interacts with the community

- a.** Local Businesses – A recurring theme through these interviews is how the congregation, both those living in the community and outside the community, find value in patronizing the local businesses to support the Fountain Square and surrounding neighborhoods. Some of the specific businesses will be named in a later section.
- b.** The Library – the public library came up in every group (mainly the Fountain Square one, but also the Garfield Park library), with a concern about what would happen if and when it goes away.
- c.** Walking – More specific to the people who live in close proximity to the target neighborhoods, many members of the congregation see walking around the

neighborhood – and especially with a purpose, like walking the dog or playing with the kids outside – as a way to engage with what other neighbors are doing and learn more about those who live in the community. People also see the value of walking the same path around the neighborhood in hopes of seeing the same people and getting to know them better.

- d. Walking to work – several people mentioned walking to work, walking to the Switchboard, walking to coffee shops, etc. and wanting to live in close enough proximity to do these daily tasks on a more local level.
- e. Talking to neighbors – either when they see them going from their cars to their houses, or sitting on their porches, or checking in on older neighbors – getting to know one’s immediate neighbors, and looking for ways to interact with them on a regular basis.
- f. Checking in with neighbors over text – specifically, a group of women in the congregation who live on Fletcher Avenue and have a group text to discuss what is going on on the street, pray for things going on, etc.
- g. Events - specifically in Fountain Square, but in other neighborhoods as well, are important to people and a way to participate in the community and meet new people. Fountain Square Pres. had a booth for the first time at Art Squared last year, which was also seen as a way for the community to see a physical representation of the church in the community.

4. What people enjoy about the community/third places

- a. Walkability and Bikeability – this came up in almost every group and that there are many perks to living in a place that is connected well by sidewalks and trails

to businesses, other neighborhoods, downtown, places to work, and parks, etc. A big part of this is the Cultural Trail – this has definitely been a change to the community and will be addressed in more depth later, but many groups mentioned the Cultural Trail, which is about ten years old now, as a positive part of their community and helps connect the neighborhoods to each other.

- b.** Parks – many parks were mentioned – Garfield Park, the Hot Shot Tot Lot, and playgrounds in the area. There is a note that the area is fairly kid friendly with a lot of spots for kids to play and is relatively safe, allowing kids to have some freedom to go to different places in the neighborhood.
- c.** Businesses – there were a few businesses that were mentioned multiple times, including – Calvin Fletcher’s Coffee Co., Square Cat Vinyl, Sam’s Silver Circle, Dairy Queen, Wildwood, and Peppy’s. There was a variety of other mentioned during the interviews, but these occurred in multiple groups. The congregation enjoys frequenting these establishments and the various ways they enhance the community.
- d.** Current partnerships with other organizations – these organizations include, but are not limited to, Horizon Christian Fellowship, the Immigrant Welcome Center, schools like SENSE, Super School, Herron, and Oaks Academy.
- e.** Special Features – Each neighborhood has special features or establishments that people enjoy or feel is unique to the area. These are often sources of pride for the community and may offer other ways to get involved. Some of these include the Fountain and Pioneer Plaza in Fountain Square, Garfield Park, the library in Fountain Square, community centers, etc.

- f. The variety of people in the area – there is a consensus among the groups that there are still a variety of people in Fountain Square and surrounding neighborhoods – there are people who are “old Fountain Square” that have been in the area for 25+ years before the urban pioneers moved in and started “rediscovering” the area after a long period of disinvestment by some groups of people. This new wave of people is often referred to as “new Fountain Square”. It is also generally accepted that the church mostly serves new Fountain Square people – not for a lack of desire to better represent the makeup of Fountain Square and surrounding neighborhoods. The congregation also appreciates the diversity of family type and income levels still in the community but knows this could soon change. See below for more information.

5. Issues the congregation sees in the community and subsequent barriers to addressing these issues

- a. Addictions – to drugs, alcohol, etc.
- b. Homelessness – in a variety of neighborhoods
- c. Domestic Violence – verbal and physical
- d. Crime/Break-ins
- e. Gentrification/people being taken advantage of because of the changing housing market – this surfaced in many different ways including feeling helpless to be able to slow down the market, wondering where people go who are pushed out of the neighborhood, closing of small businesses or the artist presence that can no longer survive in the neighborhood
- f. Mental illness

- g.** Short term renters OR absentee landlords – lack of neighbors for those landlords that don't care to rent out the house or use it solely as an Air Bnb property – takes away from the sense of community togetherness in the area
- h.** Not knowing newer neighbors who are moving in – when the neighborhoods were more “rough and tumble” closer to the early 2000s, people were visible often in trying to “clean up the neighborhood”. Now that it is cleaner, more people stay out of sight and out of mind
 - i.** There is a suspicion on both the side of “new Fountain Square” people who know the neighborhood used to be a much rougher place and “old Fountain Square” people who do not always appreciate the newer people in the community

6. Barriers:

- a.** Organizations duplicating what other organizations are doing or organizations which have different priorities
- b.** Financial ability
- c.** Lack of a building for FSP
- d.** Lack of knowledge for how to help (for a variety of these issues named above)

7. Changes in the community

- a. Cultural Trail – most see this as a positive change in the neighborhood in terms of aesthetic, encouraging people to walk and bike to more places and connection to other neighborhoods but has also substantially increased property values, which some see as a negative.
- b. People trying to move in now often have a hard time finding something affordable

- c. The neighborhoods are much more educated now – subsequently, they are geared more towards educated, wealthy, employed individuals
- d. Distrust between new and old residents
- e. Most of the north side of Fountain Square has “regentrified,” and these improvements are moving south
- f. Better aesthetic in the neighborhood than there was 20+ years ago
- g. Improvements in Garfield Park neighborhood – new businesses, artist culture, etc.

8. Recommendations moving forward:

- a. Asset map of the area
 - i. This may already exist in some capacity but producing an asset map of organizations, community amenities, even people who are essential to the core of the community will help when tackling issues described above.
- b. Asset map of the congregation (start with questions like I did with last small group)
 - i. I would like to follow up on this analysis by emailing out a small questionnaire about people’s strengths or the strengths they see in the congregation. I was able to get to this a little bit in the Kobe’s community group and it would be very helpful moving forward to have this information on the strengths of the congregation.
- c. Education on the changing demographics of the neighborhood (with SAVI)
 - i. Use available online resources to understand the true demographics of the neighborhood better and educate the congregation on these. Oftentimes there are surprises within these statistics versus the perceived reality.

- d. Getting to know businesses in Fountain Square better
 - i. It seems like a lot of what people are interested in when it comes to supporting the neighborhood is supporting businesses, and there are many that were mentioned in each group. This could be accomplished as small groups or as the wider church but would help us know people better and be more involved in the community.
 - ii. Another piece to this would be getting to know some of the organizations better, like Southeast Community Services, and see how we can collaborate with them on additional efforts.
- e. Holding more events in the neighborhood, at people's homes, etc.
 - i. This was also a recurring theme and one which could be capitalized on more often.
- f. Encouraging those who live in close proximity to one another to brainstorm ways to get to know their neighbors
 - i. As has been stated, the FSP designated "community" is closer to Fountain Square and the surrounding neighborhoods but also includes people that congregation members have relationships with. Sharing ways people have gotten to know their neighbors or talking about it more often so that it becomes more natural could help some people to get to know their neighbors better.
- g. Determine a structure (through the leadership group) to educate interested individuals on some of these issues and how we can use our assets and resources to intervene

How this Did or Did Not Answer the Original Purpose Statement

This Creative Project had a few twists and turns along the way and, in its final form, serves, not as a comprehensive overview of how Fountain Square Presbyterian Church will indefinitely work on increasing community connectedness and building relationships, but as a jumping off point for an emerging leadership group within the church to focus on some projects going forward. These projects will help enhance and give a pathway for the congregation at FSP Church to get more involved individually within their surrounding community and become more involved as a church group in the surrounding community (Fountain Square neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods). This also gives a framework as to what people in the congregation are passionate about, a small look at what skills they have, and what some of their experiences are living in close proximity to the church and the neighborhood the church looks to serve and be involved in.

The writer would like to be able to compare Fountain Square Presbyterian Church to some other churches in close proximity as to what work the other churches are doing, their makeup of the congregation, their leadership structure, size and location of the church compared to where their congregation lives, etc. This would be helpful in order to see how these various measures play into a church's ability to connect with neighbors, the neighborhood in general, and the ability to develop a felt presence in the surrounding community. This was not written up formally in this creative project but is helpful to keep in mind moving forward.

Though this project did not fully address or answer the question, or call, to equip a church (Fountain Square Presbyterian Church) to have a more intentional presence in their surrounding community to decrease isolation and individualism and foster relationship building within the community, it shows where and how this church might do so in the future and provides a framework to continue this important work for Fountain Square Presbyterian Church.

Plan to Accomplish the Recommendations

The current plan to accomplish these recommendations includes a few checkpoints and ongoing dialogue. An asset map of the area and congregation is crucial to the asset-based nature of community development and engagement that is focused on here, and that is important to Fountain Square Presbyterian Church. The asset map of the congregation will likely come in the form of an online survey honing in on some of the questions which were noted in the long survey but, due to time constraints, were not asked in the interviews on the first time around. The asset map will likely be led by myself and few other individuals and may be added to by the congregation over a period of time, electronically, or in person. Part C. is also important to getting the congregation on the same page as to what the true demographics are in the neighborhood and how that affects what is focused on by the congregation for including people in programs or activities and being aware as to how the neighborhood has changed over time (see Appendix- section A-3) with information about the Fountain Square Neighborhood from SAVI). The following four recommendations (d-g) are to be handled by a group in the church congregation who has gone through a one-year long leadership course within the church and will be leading ministries and outreach within the church. These four items, in part with some asset-mapping assistance, will be items they can work on going forward as a part of the ministry of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church and how the church, with its seemingly limited scope and capacity, can work together and work with the surrounding community to decrease isolation and individualism and increase connectedness and relationship building among neighbors, community members, and friends.

Progress Thus Far

Since the writer completed the interviews and shared this information with the elder team, there has been some forward movement on a few of the recommendations above. The most important

aspect of the above recommendations is setting up a leadership structure where these recommendations and priorities can continue on with people who may move into and out of the church on a regular basis. Over the past four months or so (starting in the summer of 2019), there has been a small group (8-10 people) meeting who have self-selected as interested in putting together a few initiatives which the congregation is interested in pursuing. The one that has gone the furthest thus far deals specifically with homelessness in the neighborhood, which has surfaced as an issue/opportunity to pursue as there have been several individuals who have visited/attended the church in the past couple of years who have identified as homeless. This connection deepened as several people in the congregation, who did not identify as homeless, often picked up, drove home, and collected supplies for these homeless individuals. The whole congregation got involved as one of the regularly attending individuals who were often homeless passed away, and Fountain Square Presbyterian Church held a memorial time for his widow and friends. All of this culminated in the church congregation wanting to more intentionally and directly reach out to and get to know individuals who identify as homeless in the Fountain Square and surrounding neighborhood, including inviting people into the congregation who are currently homeless and getting to know them and their stories better.

This smaller working group invited a Wheeler Mission employee to the monthly congregational lunch in October 2019 to teach all congregants who wished to join about trends in homelessness, who Wheeler Mission serves, the process for referring someone who is homeless to Wheeler Mission and educating the congregation on some of the other surrounding organizations who serve the homeless and where FSPC might be able to plugin. Additionally, this group is putting together a specific structure for this initiative which will include those who wish to be deeply involved in this initiative (Action Team), those who wish to be “on-call” in certain instances

(Volunteer Network) and those who are willing to be on a Prayer Team for this initiative. Each of these teams will have specific responsibilities and a chain of action for how FSPC can more intentionally engage the homeless population in the Fountain Square community and how they can work with other organizations in the area that have a similar mission. Finally, this group is also putting together a piece which documents the variety of homeless-serving organizations in the surrounding community to further educate the congregation on what to do and where to send people if they are talking with someone who identifies as homeless and is looking for assistance or a place to go. This is important as the main goal of this group is not to start a new program, as there are plenty of programs in the area which are geared towards helping those who are homeless, but to serve as an intentional connection point for those who are looking for assistance to the organizations who already serve these individuals.

As part of the small group initiative focused on homelessness in the Fountain Square neighborhood, an asset map will be created which will include assets to specifically serve the homeless population. The asset map (or another layer of the map) will include congregation-specific assets: people or organizations they know who have skills, talents, and abilities to offer to the Fountain Square community. This will be a collaborative effort with the writer, the small group focused on the homelessness initiative, and congregation members who have connections to assets in the community as they can add these to the map.

This process and structure will be evaluated as it is put into place and activated to determine the strengths and weaknesses. This would include how many people are involved in the initiative, how well decisions are able to be made, and the ability for each part of the leadership group (Action Team, Volunteer Network, and Prayer Team) to operate as one cohesive group. It can be expected that some changes will need to be made in both the structure and goals of this initiative

over time. Putting this leadership structure in place is the first step that can then be replicated and applied to other initiatives the congregants are interested in, including those named above in the conclusions section (items d-f). Ideally, there would be a similar core group for each of these initiatives, including getting to know Fountain Square businesses better, holding more events at people's homes throughout the neighborhood, and working on practical ways to intentionally get to know neighbors better, as well as others that are added later. To be built out a later date, there should also be a core group of individuals (which may be the church leadership team but could be another group of individuals) who decide upon the process for which decisions are made on what initiatives to pursue at what time. For example, if a member of the congregation has an idea for an initiative they think the church should pursue, they would make a pitch to this leadership group, or to the entire congregation, who would vet the idea, make suggestions if necessary, and ultimately decide if, as a collective congregation, this fits in with what they already know about the assets and needs of the community and if this would help build up the community in a positive way. After this, a working group team, like the one for the homelessness initiative, would be formed and start putting a structure to the new initiative.

How This Method Could Be Used In Other Places

Many churches believe one of their main purposes is to engage and be involved in the surrounding community deeply – the way they go about this and how their congregation is engaged can be all over the spectrum. If a church decides they are not currently serving the community they are located in in a sufficient way, they can undertake a similar process to the one described above to determine a few items. A variety of factors can play into how the church leadership should go about this process and how the congregation will be engaged throughout the process. The following questions should be asked and answered by the particular church before beginning.

Step 1. Who is the decision maker in this particular church? How are they being guided or advised? (i.e., Is there a board of decision makers? How are they chosen? How is the congregation at large able to give input to the decision makers, in a formal or informal manner?)

Step 1a. Is the congregation accustomed to making decisions together? Is there a practice or process for discussion and decision making as a group as opposed to separately? How does this impact Step 1 above?

Step 2. What factors play into not being engaged in the community in the way which you want to be currently? (i.e., The demographics of the church differ from the demographics of the congregation. There are currently no practical connections to the community through schools, community development entities, neighborhood organizations, etc. There is no permanent, physical presence in the neighborhood - such as with Fountain Square Presbyterian Church. The community is quickly changing. There are conflicting priorities within the congregation or denomination, making it difficult to decide where or how to start.)

Step 3: What are the ways in which your congregation currently engages with each other? (i.e. Congregation members live close together, work in the same or similar environments, send their kids to the same school, etc. There are formal engagement times, such as congregational meals, meetings, or small group/Bible studies, etc. There are volunteer activities within, and outside the church, the congregation is often involved in. There are more informal types of engagement, such as hanging out at each other's homes.)

Step 4: What amount of time does your congregation currently spend in the relevant community (i.e., Do people live there, work there, do kids go to school there, etc? Are there connections from the congregation individually or church formally to community organizations/neighborhood associations, etc? Is the congregation primarily in the neighborhood

during the church service time or other planned events? Does the congregation look like the community (demographics wise) or vice versa?)

Step 5: What amount of time does your congregation currently spend together (i.e. through community groups, small groups, Bible studies, serving together, doing fun activities, etc.)

After these initial questions, the leadership team should pick a few people to lead this effort and shape some questions, like the ones which were narrowed down to ask the Fountain Square Presbyterian congregation, which can then be shared with the congregation. The writer recommends doing this in person with groups of people, so the individuals have the ability to ask questions within a group and to the people who have put together the questions. If necessary, though, depending on the questions asked and such, these could be dispersed via the Internet or a written survey. Have a list of questions which will narrow down your focus of how to get the congregation involved in the community, which focuses on both the interests and assets of the congregation along with the needs they perceive in the community. After this initial round, it will be essential to determine which needs are perceived versus which needs are actually present in the community. It is also essential, from an asset-based community development lens, to focus on the assets of the community and to build on what is already going on in the neighborhood, not to duplicate efforts.

If doing this process within small groups, as the writer did, pull out similarities from the groups about the community, assets within the congregation, etc. This will help guide the final recommendations to get as many people on board to implement the plan as possible. The final recommendations should be broad enough to allow them to change as needed with changes in the community but not too broad that they do not provide a clear path to completion or implementation.

It would be up to the individual church and how their structure works as to who would be in charge of implementing the plan, whether it is the same group of people who did the initial survey part of the plan or if there will be interested individuals who rise up and have the capacity to work on some of the suggested items. Analyzing the results of the survey/discussion around engaging within their community is essential and requires time and attention. This makes this process from just focused on planning to implementation. Either having a structure set up already within the church for decision making and taking the plan from conception to reality is one of the most important steps as the plan will not just end with the brains behind the original idea but will be set up for success as others will take ownership of the plan and continue to follow it through. It is essential to have congregants who are from the surrounding neighborhood or community or be plugged into what the community is currently doing, as to not to duplicate efforts. If there is already a food pantry near the area, but your group wants to set up a food pantry, maybe you look for ways to partner and make the already existing food pantry stronger instead of duplicating the same service. This could go for a multitude of services or items.

Goals to Keep in Mind During this Process:

1. Allow and encourage yourself and the congregation to challenge and be challenged by the traditional ideas of “serving” in one’s community or “helping” the community. There are years and centuries of traditions in how the church has historically been connected to and integrated within their communities – some of these things have been helpful and some have not been very helpful to the surrounding communities. The point of this method is to look at one’s congregation and community in a different light (from an asset-based instead of need’s base) and this is something that is not typical in our current

society. This will take time to get used to but is worth it and is absolutely necessary to create a working relationship between all participating parties.

2. Start to move from an “individualistic” mindset to a “group” mindset. Again, this is something, as mentioned multiple times above, that is not common in current society. Individualistic thinking and living is the way most people operate, although it is not always true (we are still all connected in intricate ways, many more than we often realize). There are things we can do as individuals to more directly engage with our community, but the purpose and focus of this project is to encourage a church congregation as a whole to engage together, as one body, and integrate within their community in some tangible ways. This will look different from congregation to congregation but it should be evident that it reflects the community as a whole and helps the congregation grow together as a whole, working body and not just a group of individuals.
3. Spend time defining the surrounding community and thinking through the importance of place in your plan for engagement/integration. At the end of the day, the church is made up of individuals working together as a group, and it is difficult to be fully integrated within the community if there is not a significant portion of this group who has a personal stake in the surrounding community. Reference the Literature Review, *Slow Church* by C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison. Their section on place acknowledges that in our society, choice, especially of where individuals get to live, is essential for life as we know it and has been for 50+ years. But, when it comes to working together as a church body and integrating within the community, this choice and the encouragement to live wherever one sees fit, often outside the community one works or worships within,

contributes to a disconnection and even more individualistic mindset, more often than not.

4. Abundance versus scarcity: Similarly to asset-based community development, which focuses on the assets and abilities of the community versus the, often easier to see, needs or deficits, the abundance mentality hones in on what a certain group of people has when they work together and are open-handed instead of seeing resources as scarce and taking as much for oneself as possible, more of a closed-fist mentality. Instead of pointing out all the issues (small budgets, small congregation, oppressive government, liberal community, etc.) which could give a congregation an “out” as to not being able to offer anything to the community, there is often a shift in attitude and practices which can allow churches and communities to look at the resources from an abundance mentality and marry up assets and abilities that the group collectively possesses.
5. Allow the group (congregation in this case) to learn from the surrounding community: As a collection of people which make up the congregation, they will not have, nor should have, all the “answers” for how to engage with and integrate into the community more effectively. There are undoubtedly things the surrounding community will have to offer the congregation, in the abundance and asset-based mentality, and thoughts they will have on the best way or facets the congregation can engage with them. It is pertinent to take time to listen to the community and actively seek out their opinions. This is best done by going TO the community, instead of asking them to come to YOU. This gives the congregation the ability to get diverse and wide-range of views on the issues at hand and allow as many people as possible to engage.

6. Measuring “success” is important, but be prepared to wait: This process takes time. Often a long time. This indicates that a) patience is essential in this process, b) there needs to be a solid commitment from a good portion of the congregation to stay and work through this process for a number of years and, c) things won’t work out how they are planned the first, second, third, or even many times afterward. Setbacks and failures are common, but they are all opportunities to learn *together* as a collective group and move forward together. It is important to keep track of how well certain initiatives or ideas go and the process around these but encourage one another not to get discouraged when these initiatives or ideas do not pan out as planned.
7. Finally, it is important to remember that things can always change and it is important to be adaptable and responsive to the change. If something isn’t working, change the structure of how decisions are being made or the specific implementation process is happening. If there aren’t enough people involved to make it viable, table the idea until emerging leaders are interested so there is less of a chance of burnout. If something drastic changes in the community and a new priority comes up, allow the congregation to be responsive to this and add in new priorities. This will make for a healthy leadership structure and a well-engaged congregation in their surrounding community.

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Appendix

A-1

Full Interview with Mission Indy: Ron Greiner and Matt Cutler

“What is the difference between churches who do ‘well’ at reaching out to their community vs. churches who are struggling and why are they struggling at reaching their communities?”

There are many churches who want to reach their community but it is very difficult to get churches and their congregations out of the ‘rut’ of what they do on a day-to-day basis. Many churches have a pretty comfortable range of what they usually do engage with the community whether that is through a nursing home, school program, food pantry, etc. None of those are detrimental in and of themselves but often the thinking is needs-based as opposed to asset-based. There is a precedent for this – “the city, churches, and social services are all needs-based and trying to help the same people who are homeless, hungry, or without work”. Attempting to change this thinking and move from seeing people as lacking to those who have assets and skills to offer their surrounding community is something which takes practice and something Mission Indy has set out to do. “They want to partner with lots of organizations in the community but that can be tough when many of them are still needs-based and you are not trying to offend them when you do some things differently”.

It is also difficult to continue reaching out to the community through partnerships and through the community’s strengths if there is no feedback from the community. “We gauge our effectiveness and efficiency in a project by how much feedback we get—if we aren’t getting positive feedback why do we keep doing it?”

People struggle with the holistic concept of the Bible—some people think that if you start doing some of these things, then we’re getting into the “social gospel” and forgetting about bringing people to Jesus. But how do we incorporate the whole ideas of the Bible and the centrality of the

church not just as a building. Churches can be living the gospel of Jesus by doing a really good housing project. But churches can also do a housing project that is just keeping people busy and hasn't come out of a place of the gospel.

“How do people go from Mission Indy to enact change in their own church?”

From what those at Mission Indy have seen in their work prior to Mission Indy and having been working with churches and community organizations in the past 20 years in Indianapolis, people who want to enact change in their own church and congregations usually have to be collaborating with other leaders and members of the church. “The real change [they] have seen in churches has come from consistent people in the congregation being motivated...It takes synergy and people being consistent and motivated bringing [these ideas] to their congregation and enacting change”. It becomes more difficult to do this when people move around a lot and there is a lot of turnover in the church.

“Do most of the churches you work with have a lot of resources and what kind of resources do they have?”

“Churches often don't know what resources they have because everything is coming to them—the ministry, the daycare, the sports, the Sunday morning worship, is at one location and they are not going around seeing the needs of other locations and what other locations have that might be better than the church building”.

They have also noticed that larger churches tend not to partner with Mission Indy or other organizations because they believe they have enough already – enough people, money, equipment, resources in general, etc.

Though Mission Indy is located in Indianapolis and focused on and has relationships with churches in Indianapolis, this model can be continued replicated anywhere. Bringing churches

together and encouraging them to see each other's assets and ways they are uniquely positioned to serve their communities and spurring continuing conversations among church groups is not just specific to Indianapolis.

“What are some of the ways Mission Indy has seen visible success?”

The Mission Indy Mission is to train people to go home and love people where they are at. Ways they have seen this work well include the interns and some churches who have been able to change their thinking after spending some time with Mission Indy and apply what they learned to their community. They note that it is difficult to do because of the comparison factor. It is not fair to compare what one church is doing in their community to another because there are too many different factors which affect outcomes, but it is difficult for us as humans to not compare these things.

The most fruit is with college interns. They are present for the an entire 10-week summer program and can have these experiences over a couple months not just one week and get to dive into a deeper discussion about them.

Mission Indy wants the churches who come and participate to figure out *on their own* what they need to do through recognizing their history and story and what their assets are and then coming up with what the neighborhood could do. Instead some churches see the program as Mission Indy coming to them to tell them how they can better serve their community.

A-2

Notes from the story of Englewood Christian Church

Significance: Englewood Christian Church is another congregation the writer has experience with and is located a couple miles from Fountain Square Presbyterian. This specific church has transformed much of their surrounding neighborhood in a specific way over many years and can be helpful to what Fountain Square Presbyterian is looking to do in their surrounding community.

Englewood Christian Church was established in 1896 on the eastside of Indianapolis when the area, currently known as Englewood, was primarily rural at the time (hence Rural Street where the church is located on). The history of Englewood directly impacts their present efforts and how they see their connection to and engagement with the neighborhood.

This group interview was conducted at a board and staff retreat in February 2018 and focused on the history of Englewood as a church and its organizations (such as Daystar Childcare and Englewood Community Development Corporation) which started as a result of the church's desire to be directly involved in the neighborhood on a day-to-day basis. This interview included members of Englewood Christian Church who have been involved in the church for decades and live in the neighborhood.

Debbie: Why hasn't Englewood Church moved to the suburbs? Initially they were very needs-based: Englewood Neighborhood Christian Ministries. There were lots of conversations beforehand about church and how to approach it.

Girls and guy houses next to the church – Anybody could walk in and stay

Susan: emphasized that WE weren't the needy people, Englewood had things to meet other people's needs

Debbie: Didn't use the words needs-based specifically, but that's what they meant

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Joe: When ECDC was incorporated the language changed to very asset-based, looking for opportunities opposed to meeting needs

Debbie: Conversations happened in small groups – who we are, what is God doing, how do we not focus on the needs?

Susan: How do you transition the neighborhood from just giving things out from the church?

Stopped flowing cash and other assets to people and started trying to change the systemic issues.

Didn't use to enter into people's lives as a church

Jim: Houses Englewood had were not always viewed well, they were viewed with suspicion

They never set out to reform community development, they set out to be the church. We aren't trying to be a good CDC, a good property management staff, a good daycare. We are trying to be a good church hand the body of Christ. We have to use the language of community development so other people will understand why we do what we do. Otherwise the rest of the world won't understand.

Community Development looks like loving people in a tangible way.

Joe: Originally, when the free stuff went away (when the church stopped giving things out to the neighborhood like a food bank and clothing drive) neighbors were very upset. It was often said "you people call yourself a church" because we didn't give them free money. Neighbors just wanted money, church members just wanted a religious experience – reconciling the two was difficult and still is.

Connecting how the neighborhood sees the church and how the church sees the neighborhood so there isn't a huge divide between the two

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Jim: Many people think churches aren't competent to do real things. Why should the church be allowed to do community development? Tension is created within our own minds with the narrative we have ourselves and what other people think we should do.

Joe: The first way we could show we could physically tangibly serve others. First rehabbed the infant house.

Susan: A shift in language – church as the first family, not family as first family. Has day-to-day implications, not just Sunday implications. Kind of went underground for a while and focused on each other to solidify identity. When we come up, we are able to connect to neighbors and other organizations.

Jim: Principalities and powers – City, IPS, Library, Parks Department, etc. When you learn how to take care of one another, you learn how to take care of anyone. “and the others” – those outside the church. Obligation to neighborhood, city, etc.

Can't lay it out ahead of time

Joe: Initially there was a strong bent towards homeownership. Originally they had 20 rental units and they didn't want to increase that. Now they have 100+.

Change in mindset after doing the work

Jim: ECDC started as a ministry team (originally paid by the church). For the first 10 or 11 years there have been conversations about rolling up ECDC back into Englewood Christian Church because they don't want it to have too much of a life of its own.

Susan: It's about control. There is a lot of fear about what “they” are doing. Financial downfall of the church, potentially.

Joe: Proximity doesn't necessarily mean community. One has to actively, physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally engage.

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Jim: Eastside had traditionally just been a place with a bunch of warring neighborhood – within the QOL plan and GINI plan which was Joe's job.

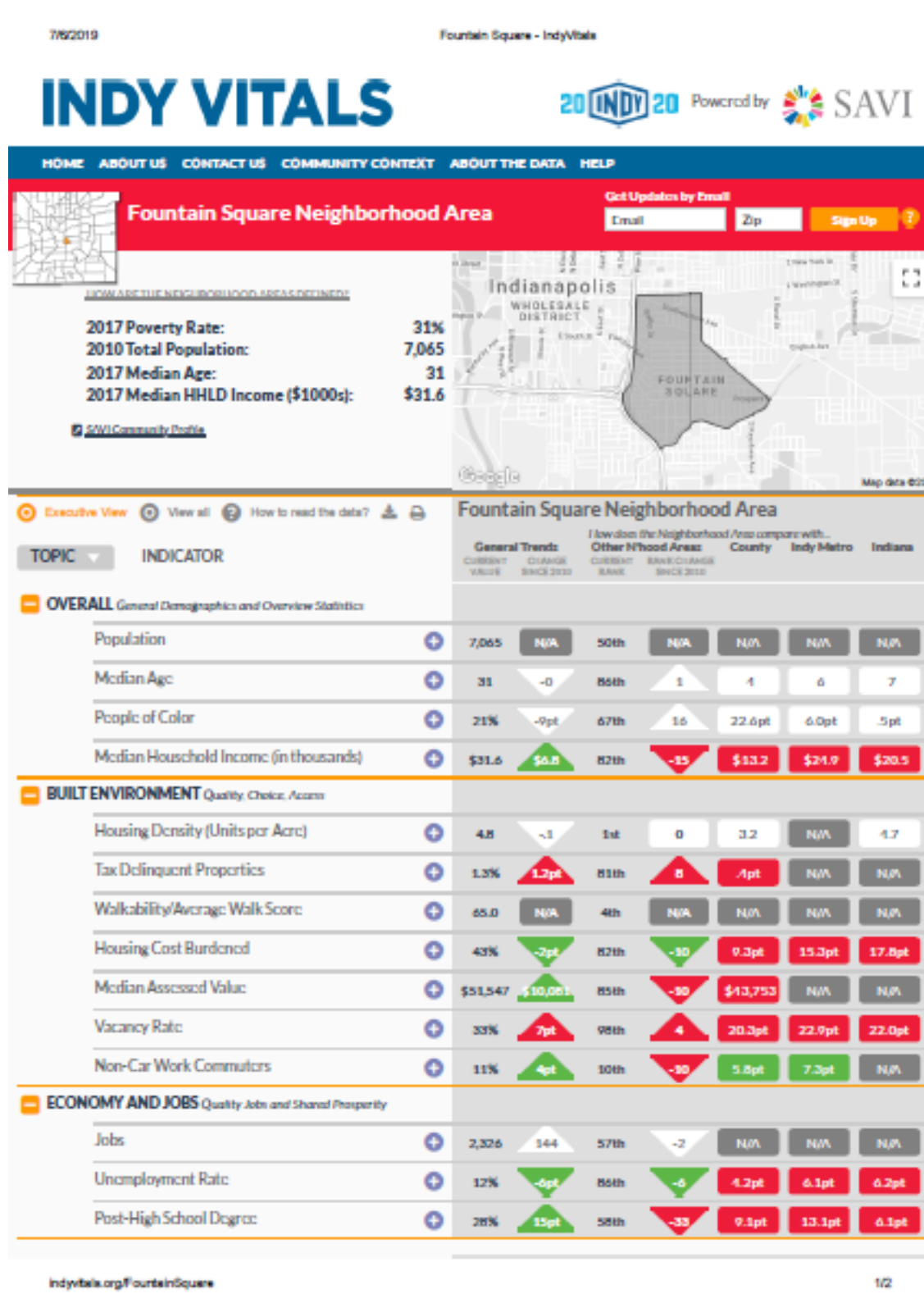
Started to meet people on the near eastside and 2005 was kind of a turning point for everyone and groups came together. QOL moved everyone forward.

CARE Not as something in our spare time or with spare resources but with all of us.

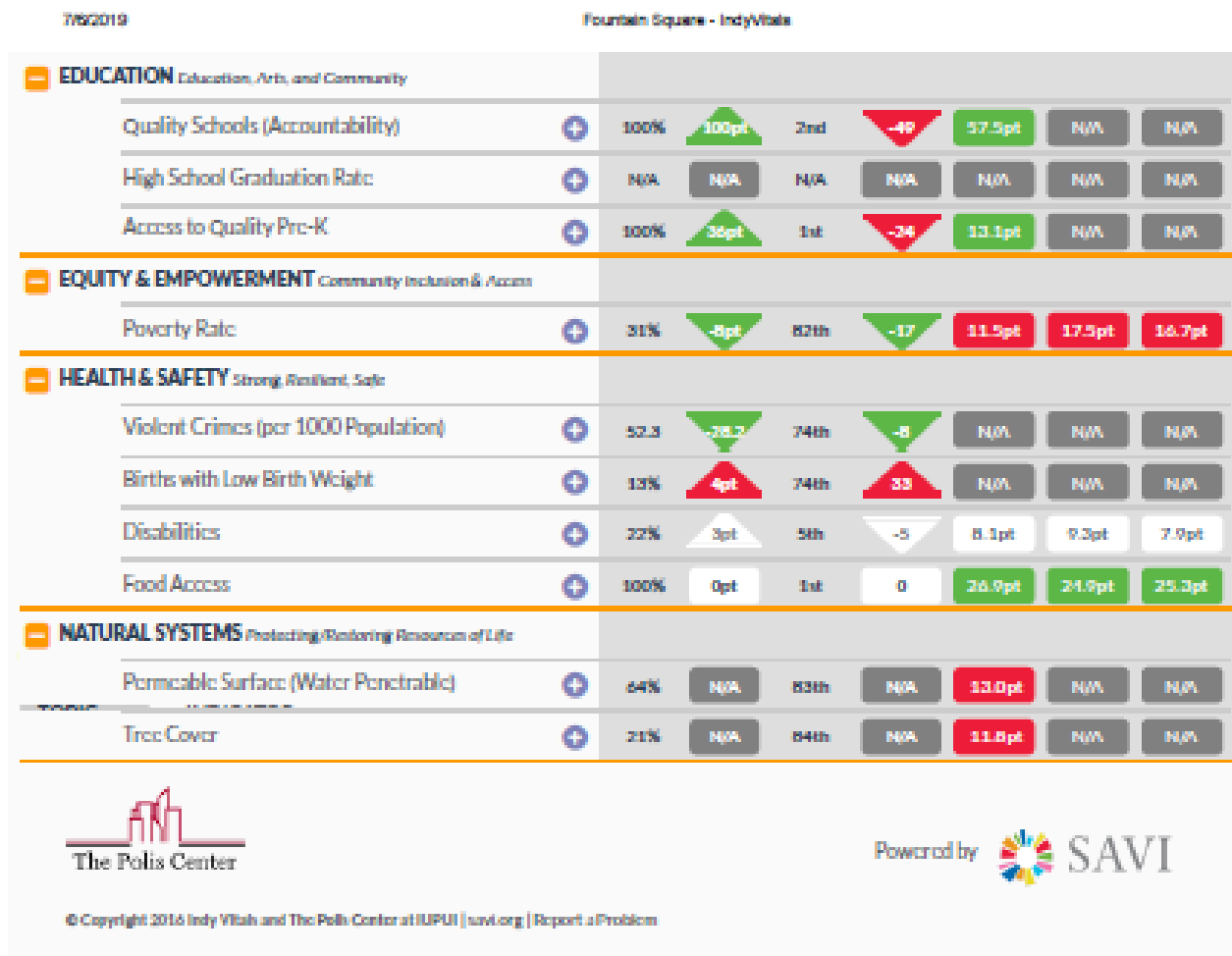
Go back and remember. Remember who we are as the church and that we're not a separate entity.

A-3

IndyVitals for the Fountain Square Neighborhood



Exploring Community Development within the Church



Synthesis of Data:

The Fountain Square Neighborhood is ranked 1st among neighborhoods in a number of categories including housing density which is a huge opportunity for the Fountain Square Presbyterian church community as there are more people within a small area that can be capitalized upon as people can easily walk to community amenities or other people's homes, etc. They also rank the highest among neighborhoods in Access to Quality Pre-K and Food Access. The Food Access stat does not seem to match up with what some members of the community were saying as there is not a grocery within a walkable distance for most members of the community – there is walkable access to many restaurants though and some convenience stores

which may make up this statistic. Fountain Square is also the 4th most walkable neighborhood with a walk score of 65 – as is noted in the interviews, much of this is most likely due to the Cultural Trail coming through the neighborhood and connecting it better to downtown for walkers and cyclists and businesses establishing themselves along the Cultural Trail, which has improved the density of businesses and economic opportunity in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is also well-connected to neighborhoods like the Near Eastside, Twin Aire on the southeast side and future home to the Community Justice Campus (job opportunities for low-income individuals), and Garfield Park on the south side (many community amenities including Garfield Park and the next closest library as most every group mentioned in the interviews below that the Fountain Square Library will most likely be closing in the next couple years). What would not have been reflected in this latest SAVI report is the addition of the Red Line, bus rapid transit, which was just added to IndyGo's system in September of 2019, which connects Fountain Square even more completely to the rest of the City.

With these numbers and the perception from the outside of how Fountain Square has been changing, there are also some surprising statistics including the rank of median income in the neighborhood and the poverty rate. Median household income is \$31,600, which has continued to increase, but is still ranked 82nd across the City and is considerably lower than all the other comparables (county, metro, and state). The poverty rate in Fountain Square is 31%, also ranked 82nd in the area, with 43% in the area housing cost burdened. This shows there are still a number of people in the neighborhood, even as it's changing and becoming more affluent as is evidenced by the homes being built and the businesses moving to the neighborhood, who are not able to take advantage of this economic growth, for whatever reason, and may be disadvantaged because of these changes. This is where Fountain Square Presbyterian Church can offer connection to

Exploring Community Development within the Church

community to bring people together who may be detached from the local community or society and do not have the social connections to build wealth and stability in a place.

A-4

Full Interviews with Fountain Square Presbyterian Church Community Groups

Interview with the Aalsma's Community Group: 5/21/2018

Community Group Questions:

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**
 - **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**
 - Garfield Park, Fountain Square, Bates-Hendricks, and Fountain Square
- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**
 - Stores, restaurants, walking, parks, Shelby Street trail, cultural trail, clients are in the neighborhood (work), walking the dog in the neighborhood, Garfield Park Farmer's Market, library, neighborhood drama (when the cops show up), Facebook, Nextdoor, schools (SENSE, Crystal House Academy), First Friday's, lots of music festivals and the opportunity to volunteer there
 - When first moved here, did more intentional things like the meetings and such, now not so much
 - Specific to knowing residents and not just visitors: lots of pedestrian foot traffic
 - When things were rougher in the community, they wanted to know their neighbors more

- **What are some things you enjoy about the community?**

- Trails, Nicey, restaurants, Dairy Queen, Calvin Fletcher's, Sam's Silver Circle, library, outside movie night, Shakespeare in the park, fireworks, Arthur's music, Twin Aire Kroger, Aldi in Garfield Park, people's homes, gathering places, Cultural Trail, parks (Hot Shot Tot Lot), like that people are out and about in their part of the City

- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**

- **i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**
- Interested in the connections that are happening now and strengthening the connections we have now: Horizon, Welcome Center, schools (Super School, SENSE)

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**

- **i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.**
- Addictions, some of the negative things they used to see they don't see anymore – broken families screaming and yelling – Garfield Park: break-ins, crime, cops chasing people, men loitering around the Garfield Park area (homelessness, unemployment), drug usage within the park, domestic issues
- How to navigate the socio-economic and cultural differences between those who are living in poverty and have been here for a long time and the middle class that is moving into the neighborhood. Now it's becoming an issue more than it was before. Stemming out of that is affordable housing for many (rental units)

- More crime since the influx of gentrification, break-ins, etc. Somewhat of an attitude of animosity of others that were here first that may target some of the ones that are just now moving in
- People who are being taken advantage of in the neighborhood because of development
- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**
- **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - **What changes have been positive?**
 - **What have been negative?**
 - Fountain Square has seen quite a bit of regentrification and is moving south – start losing out on things which were originally part of the community
 - Lose the history, housing values go up, property values are a lot higher than they were in the early 2000s, aesthetic is better
 - Seemed like people were more community-oriented when they first moved in around 20 years ago, but could be because it was more of a community oriented block
 - Now there are more new builds and new people
 - Don't see the kids playing in the street and parents talking
 - Enjoyed living here more before the gentrification BUT we were part of it. Felt like it was more exciting, new, but now it's what everyone wants to do! Want to do things that are different and not gentrified – not as exciting now. Would like to engage more with neighbors and help neighbors love the City more who are not

like us. Great neighborhood, great people not like us, and want to interact with people who are not like us

- As the history of the community erodes, then the sense of community will also erode. Homes are being flipped here so quickly, people don't stay and for those who want to put down roots in a certain neighborhood or have a connection to the rest of the community, that can be worrisome, etc.
- Cultural Trail: positive change! Pedestrians come through the neighborhood at SENSE – kids that can come to school on the trail. Before the Cultural Trail, people didn't cross the interstate
- Garfield Park Farmer's Market, Social Club, Neighborhood Association, Tube Factory, Listen Hear, getting a new brewery

Interview with the Sinsabaugh's Community Group: 5/23/2018

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**

- **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**
- Garfield Park, Bates-Hendricks, Fountain Square, have a couple from St. Clair Place (is that in?) Anyone who comes voluntarily to the church is part of it – how do we define it for those who aren't part of the church but are in the community of the church. How do we define that? Most of the neighborhoods on the Southeast side which have names – Twin Aire, Little Flower, St. Clair Place could be part of the community. Now Fountain Square is so refined and upscale
- Two things: community which the church is serving and the community which people come from to the church. What is our church responsible for? Plenty

churches downtown that are responsible for downtown. We are more responsible to those three – Bates-Hendricks, Garfield Park, Fountain Square. Southside of Indianapolis in general.

- Regular trips and have relations with people in Romania- is that part of our community?
- People we want to serve: low-income, those who are struggling in the neighborhood
- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**
 - Walk to work and back a lot, interact a lot in warm weather (gardens which are close together, back up to other neighbors gardens), working at the Switchboard, those who are working there (some are from this community), front porches and seeing people walking by, etc.
 - A lot of people from different cultural backgrounds, different socio-economic status, mix together in third places but is becoming less so- more solidified for one group or another. One way to enter into that is to be able to create spaces for lots of different types of people to be in one place together as part of a neighborhood again
 - Calvin Fletcher's, Peppy's, barber shop in Fountain Square

- Would like to interact with people better on a daily basis: more interaction with families in Fountain Square with small kids (owned a baby store in Fountain Square for 2 years) wanted to have an indoor playspace for families in the colder months for people to interact. Few months during the year where it's harder to have those places.
- **What are some things you enjoy about the community?**
- Walkable and friendly community – lots of foot traffic right before the businesses. Relationships, neighbors, walkability, why they want to stay. Sitting out on the porch. Mixing of different people groups and cultural groups – doesn't NOT happen in other parts of the city but noticeable here. Many people end up here and mix here together. See that a lot in parks (Garfield Park), Value World, Calvin Fletchers, library. Consistency is key- want to see consistent people in their lives (like at the library – same person there)
- Loss of those spaces feels like the death of the neighborhood people knew/grew up in. Can tell that spaces are changing and that is a hard hit to people that have been there for a long time
- Lot of the parking is going quickly – leave anytime after 4 on a Friday, can't find parking when they come back
- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**
 - i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. **What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**
 - Calvin Fletchers, Peppy's, Square Cat (not appealing consistently to the same group of people), Rav, Kuma, Arthur's, where the fountain is on the square, Hi-

Fi, Pioneer Plaza (3rd Fridays on the Plaza), Family Dollar, Subway, My Pet Carnivore

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**
 - **i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.**
 - Crime – due to mental illness, homelessness, young people acting out, car break-ins in the summer, schools in the neighborhood – SENSE (don't know how well they're doing, might be struggling – mentions talking to Maggie), the middle school in the area, Manual, don't see a lot of issues which are mentioned in bold, seems to be a neighborhood which doesn't seem to have many of these issues.
 - A challenge might be how to keep people who are having issues closer to us instead of pressing people out. Keeping spaces that give people a reason to stay who do have issues instead of adding spaces which only cater to higher incomes. Some areas value cool spaces over people who have been here a long time and have enjoyed the spaces they currently have. Not a specific Fountain Square issue but an issue in general.
 - Feels like an unstoppable force when the market starts to take over
 - **Q:** where do people go who were living here 10-15 years ago? Where did they move to? Many were transient and had to move out. Pushed to the fringe – outskirts. Now neighborhoods like Garfield Park are experiencing that
 - People at Fountain Square are willing to go where the need is or where the people with needs are – how to connect with them or go to them

Exploring Community Development within the Church

- Best thing: build community and relationships – whether that’s here or going somewhere. But not going somewhere to serve food or save people, but to know people and build relationships.
 - Lot of gifting to work with **YOUTH and ART** in the congregation. Places we’re serving now- can develop some kind of program or spending time with people and perhaps focusing on these things?
 - Starting with service, moving beyond service to relationships (service as the entry point and then able to expand)
 - Redeemer built a community of youth at New Star
 - What are the opportunities for us to volunteer more at the Community Center (mentorships, business mentorships, English language classes?) Who to talk with to explore this more? People there for lots of different reasons to interact with
 - Have more connections with Project Love – but is kind of a “fly-in” experience
 - Went and folded clothes – from the parking lot to the building – many people/kids in the parking lot and around the neighborhood who were nothing like us.

Opportunity to connect with people there
 - Make sure if we are doing programming – complements what is already there and not take away from what already exists
 - Can be a lot of volunteer burnout (relieving people at Project Love/Horizon who are there every night)
- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**
 - **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - **What changes have been positive?**

Exploring Community Development within the Church

- **What have been negative?**
- Cultural Trail is a big change that has ushered in a lot of other changes
- “Slip’n’slide for all the hipsters and young professionals”

Interview with Vanest Community Group: 6/13/2018

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**
 - o **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**

North Square, North and South FS, Bates-Hendricks, Garfield Park, Fletcher Place, Twin Aire, Beech Grove. Redeemer has “parishes” which go further around the City – FS wants to do something different and be more local instead of regional-how to specifically draw a boundary around it.

Schools – IPS (Super School), the Oaks, Herron, PPHS, don’t have any kids at SENSE but help out there. Relationship with these school – not necessarily boundaries but relationships between

Cultural – North Square interesting cultural boundaries – broke away from FS and wanted to be different. When they were starting up the church there was a lot of talk about Old FS and New

FS – don’t talk like that quite as much anymore and glad they don’t so it doesn’t feel like “us and them”. Haven’t ever said “we’re a church for this person”. Are we that? We haven’t defined ourselves like that but that doesn’t mean we aren’t that. Redeemer: “By the city, for the city, in the city”.

Generational – Part of the “hipster” generation – getting more homebuyers than renters in the last couple years. Condos are a new phenomenon. Lot of the older people cannot stand the taller buildings (one on the corner of Fletcher and McCarty?)

Racial boundaries – 1 black person in the room – racial cultural boundary. Is there an issue with how we are reaching out or how we look to the community for us to have such a low percentage

of black people? Only places that they have seen it truly mixed – Calvin Fletchers and Switchboard. Hispanic – in Twin Aire. How are they attracted to church? FS is traditionally poor

and white. Has changed over the years but traditionally is not diverse. Are a lot of the black people young and hipster and just coming in? Have to TRY to see the cultural diversity. We don't currently look like we are a church for a diverse congregation – do we address this, how do we address it and how would we be able to go about changing it?

Hard to draw people into a community health center once a week. How else do you go about it?

To asset map the neighborhood- go out and be in the neighborhood. How much are we in the neighborhood and making relationships with people? As a church body. **How to better get to know the people?** Who are they and what are their passions?

REFERENCE THE “THIS CULTURAL MOMENT” PODCAST

Good at welcoming people once they enter the building – how are we able to be out in the neighborhood on a more regular basis? How to wrap in the homeless individuals?

- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - o **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**

Walking the dog and able to start conversation with people in the neighborhood. Get to know people on the street, names, dogs' names, etc. With the homeless people who come into the church – stopping and knowing their names and talking to them. Noticing them. Opening up the porch and inviting people to come up and chat or even come into the house. Hanging out in the front instead of the back makes a huge difference.

Kids playing out in front.

Booth at Art Squared? – Usually do the leaders’ retreat that weekend. The one thing the neighborhood does usually. Should have a float (we did this year). Have a tent or booth next year? Should regularly be a part of the community events. We attend those individually but maybe not as a church.

We’re on neighborhood boards and stuff, etc.

Support the local businesses.

Church outside? Could do it in the parking lot with a first Sunday pitch-in. Kind of a hassle to have it every month for some people. Think about scaling back on how often and making it a bigger deal? Doing more things with them?

- **What are some things you enjoy about the community?**
- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**
 - o **i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**

Libraries – Garfield Park, FS, Calvin Fletchers, Lincoln Lane, New Day, Revolution, Garfield Park Farmer’s Market, Tortas, duck pin bowling, Bauhaus, the Fountain/Plaza, free concerts in the evening, Square Cat Vinyl (brings high schoolers and older people together), Tube Factory/Big Car, tattoo artists, barber, Fountain Square Clay Center, Swing dancing, Fletcher Place Church (across from Calvin Fletcher’s on Virginia), Sam’s Silver Circle

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**
 - o **i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.**

Drug abuse, mental illness (those go together). Addiction in general – to include alcoholism.

Verbal and physical abuse – hear a ton of yelling – that is a sign of domestic violence.

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Collaboration of different families – kids being passed around a lot, transiency of families, family members coming and going from the house. How are we a stable place for people to be? Food desert – closest place is Safeway. Convenience stores don't give people good choices for food.

People who are moving into the neighborhood know the reputation FS came with and there is a fear associated with that. And with the people who are old FS and have been in the house for 3 or 4 generations also know the reputation and are probably fearful as well. People are protective of their neighbors and neighborhood as well.

Gentrification – downtown FS used to be very rough and tumble. Homes getting flipped in north FS. Problem with short term renters and those who are just using the homes to do bad things in, etc.

Public transportation – Red Line on Shelby. Multi-modal trail to come on East Street? – from Lilly to Garfield Park – need one-sided parking on East Street. Bikeshare program has come out and they are ready to put them in – need to vote on where we want them.

Arts Community – starting to leave FS. Believes the art culture is GONE from FS.

Urban Pioneers in the early 2000s. Visible in the neighborhood. In the Neighborhood Assoc., CDCs, n'hood cleanups, etc. New wave of people – don't know them. The people who are buying the expensive houses are not as involved in the neighborhood things that have been set up. The work that the people who were urban pioneers had done is lost on the new people.

- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**

Suspicion on both sides – long timers and new people.

- **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - o **What changes have been positive?**

- **What have been negative?**

Interview with Hickman Community Group: 7/11/2018

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**
 - o **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**

Where members and regular attenders are – take care of them first

Closer the neighborhood is to FSP, the more important

Garfield Park, FSP

Who the members are in relationship with – that is who we serve primarily

The people who are in the congregation (1st). Then Fountain Square, Bates-Hendricks, Fletcher Place, Garfield Park, WeCan, Twin Aire

Supporting ministry closest to the church primarily

Other surrounding Christian communities in the neighborhood – Horizon, etc.

Part of the surrounding Redeemer community which is City wide. But specific to FSP for us.

Mercy Fund – we've paid in much less than we've gotten out and used directly within our neighborhoods or those connected to the church. Those in the neighborhoods directly connected to people in the church. More resources than not by being connected to Redeemer

Culturally: white and educated. It defines us but we don't want it to

- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - o **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Calvin Fletcher's coffee shop – hanging out with groups of guys there. Built relationships with different groups of people

Neighbors, especially those who park out front as opposed to those who park in the back

Porch parties, dinners

Work at the school (Super School). See it as the larger Fountain Square area.

Want to be more intentional and thoughtful about walking the same path in the neighborhood – see the value in this

Value World, Library (normal discussion on the library closing)

Sam's Silver Circle – want to more intentionally meet with people there

Fountain Square Neighborhood Association

Mowing lawns

Texting – regularly talking to people in the community

Women on a text chain on 3 different blocks on Fletcher

Some girls that come work out in a garage for the Wilson's

The Y

Calvin Fletchers (as a barista)

Talking to neighbors on their front porch – checking in on neighbors

Church!

Block parties (on Fletcher)

Open backyards – having a community using those and then owning property and renting out to tenants – developing good relationships with tenants

- **What are some things you enjoy about the community?**

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Walkability, variety, uniqueness, not all standardized, bikeability, Square Cat Vinyl, Coffee shops, Dairy Queen, Sam's Silver Circle, Rooftop Grill/Bar, still a mix of people – educated and uneducated, long term and new residents, mix of homes, etc.

Have enough resources that you can meet all your basic needs in a small area but still run into the same people in that location. Get that in a small town but not in the suburbs. Having a tight circumference to get to know people easily

The community is accustomed to working together – working together to make rules, do development, make change. Think everyone has a voice – City, neighborhood association, developers, school systems, etc. Doesn't feel like one group is taking over

But this piece is in conflict with the neighbors who have been here for a long time who don't want you in their business unless there is a crisis and they need other perspectives.

South Fountain Square – more like a block-by-block basis as to whether they want to collaborate with people

Old Fountain Square vs New Fountain Square – how and when this came about. Did people already live here and they are old fountain square or did they move here because it was a run-down area? It was a closer knit neighborhood at one point – people were outside more and neighbors knew each other more.

There are people who don't want to be connected and people who do – and that can fluctuate.

Some will come into the house and get to know you a little more and some will hang out on the porch.

Don't think there is a clear break between old and new lines -but there can be a difference

4th of July – some do and do not appreciate the madness

- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**

- **i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**

Wildwood, Switchboard, Mission 27

When Redeemer was developing the Fountain Square Church plant concept – seemed to be more around the needs of the residents who had been here longer term. Since being here, it doesn't seem to be where the best match is – socially and culturally. Best match is with the newer residents or the people who have been here longer and have more education. **(How to reconcile these two things)**

Did some monthly worship services before planting the church

Desire has been to be a mix of old and new FS but that has never really taken off in the way that was envisioned

None of the people we started with were old Fountain Square but that's who we were trying to reach

BUT just because that's not who the church is made up of doesn't mean we can't reach those people

Would take partnership with people who have been in the neighborhood 30, 40+ years

Want to be a welcoming place for people to worship in for homeless, old Fountain Square, etc.

Capacity for children's ministry which could serve neighborhood kids walking in off the street, that could increase our ability to host other adults. Need space, volunteers, other programming, etc.

Horizon – has been here for 20 years. Continuing to serve the neighborhood but the church has struggled to stay afloat – financially or with people

They have been able to reach out to neighbors easier because they had their doors open a lot

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Reached out to kids programs – focused on specific issues in the neighborhood

Horizon has the longevity and has learned a lot about being rooted in the neighborhood. And helping people be accountable to each other and their neighborhood

Calvary/Horizon churches are very grassroots oriented and low programming. What's the balance? They put a lot of their money in missionaries and such – both locally and internationally

Difficult to create a church that is a mix of old and new. Socioeconomic status is so large, often hard to overcome. What is the balance between these?

Partnering with these organizations like Horizon is helpful

Horizon is starting to partner with some entrepreneurial people using parts of the building

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**
 - o **i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.**
- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**
- **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - o **What changes have been positive?**
 - o **What have been negative?**

Group of homeless people who identify with Fountain Square – those that come regularly to FSP and those that have come periodically. Fountain Square specific homeless community

Brookside – seems to be a church that has integrated with the neighborhood very well. Based on what model? Re-entry program, community development corporation, pastor was incarcerated at one point – helps reach a certain population

People from Northview rotate through once a month or so but some drive down and are consistent members

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Lot of volunteers and philanthropy and private grants (with a CDC/reentry program, etc.) Are there permanent ways that FSP can be involved or partner with people who are involved in these ways

Financial sustainability – sign of success or failure? Do we have a benefactor? Would we still be around if we didn't have financial support from Redeemer/Harrison Center

One of the very few faith communities that have had a positive relationship with the art community. Are there limitations that come along with having the Harrison Center attached to Redeemer? (Pat says no)

Interview with Pumphrey's Community Group: 11/18/2018

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**
 - o **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**

Neighborhood church – most drive short distances or walk

Most are in the southeastern corner of the city

Beech Grove for example can be served by the church but is not the primary focus of the church

Schools that we are part of – Oaks, Herron, Super School, SENSE

Partnership with Horizon Fellowship Church

Some of the homeless who come on Sundays – their own community as well

Fountain Square Church demographics does not directly represent the neighborhood demographics. Want to serve that demographic but the current church is the more affluent people of the neighborhood and the people we would usually come in contact with or associate with anyways

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Believe we are getting a more diverse group/congregation and want to be open and ready to serve those that come

People that feel comfortable here are comfortable because there's a lot of people that look like each other.

Did the majority of the people that come or that we retain grow up in the church?

There could be perks of not being in a traditional church building as it could be less intimidating for new people or people that have not had great experiences with the church in the past.

Most people that show up are of a certain demographic – don't get old fountain square people.

Mostly young professionals- people coming from Redeemer that were looking for a smaller church in FSPC

Opening doors to other socio-economic groups means being uncomfortable many times – either need to get used to this or be used to the uncomfortability of it

- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - o **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**

Walking around the neighborhood – running, biking, Wildwood

Don't necessarily know everyone's name, but you see the same people

Being immediate neighbors – next door or across the street and be able to get to know them.

Much more of a ministry on a neighbor basis than we have as a church

Women's group on Fletcher – Ann, Stephanie, total of 8 neighbor women

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Cleaning church member's house – learning what each other's talents are and utilizing them

(Asset-based)

Picnic table in the front yard, eat out front – b/c the neighborhood has changed so much recently, there are more people out and about walking and can talk to them

Halloween is a good time to meet people

Dairy Queen, Calvin Fletcher's, other businesses on Virginia, the Library

Can meet Doug and some of the other homeless people there from the neighborhood

Talking to neighbors across the fence, talking to people as they ride by on bikes or walk

Community leaders like Rex Fisher and places like the Switchboard

- **What are some things you enjoy about the community?**
- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**
 - o **i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**

Walkability – things close to where people live – still not enough to have everything within walking distance though. And some things have come and gone

Calvin Fletcher's

Walking down to Sam's – misses walking to pubs in England

Parks/Playgrounds – lots of kids in the community, safety of the street that they live on – let their kids run up and down to people's houses

La Margarita

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**
 - o **i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.**

Still a little bit of wildness in the neighborhood – random people in the neighborhood

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Still people who look out for others in the neighborhood- people who want to keep a semblance of order in the neighborhood

Violent crime- between people who know each other and not just random

People usually just go through garages and most garages are detached so it's not scary

When running into homeless people, it's often evident they have mental and emotional issues – sometimes disconcerting

Evident drug presence – heroin

Little by little there are blocks that are getting “cleaned up”

Education about the neighborhood

Online neighborhood – Nextdoor – people speak out about others much more viciously than they would in person

Calmer 4th of July than in the past

Doesn't feel like a downtown neighborhood – with being so close to downtown and the neighborhood. Pretty peaceful and quiet

Thinking about a lot of other cities and how close we are to downtown, they still have yards and are a little secluded from the City.

- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**
- **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - **What changes have been positive?**
 - **What have been negative?**

People are trying to make the neighborhood better – people with means.

SAVI report on changing neighborhoods – percent of people with a bachelor's degree – used to be 2% and is now 30%. Demographics are very different as well.

Exploring Community Development within the Church

When they moved here it was old Fountain Square – now is joggers, people who work for Lilly, etc.

When it comes to ministering to neighbors- it has changed from new to old Fountain Square

Don't want to be another Mass Ave. neighborhood, like the mix. Don't want to push everyone out. Want it to be improved and nice but not to be unattainable.

Want it to be nice for the people in the neighborhood without pushing them out

Being neighbors with some old Fountain Square neighbors has helped some of the new people get to know them and grow some trust

There was some distrust with the people coming in and the old fountain square people

“Those people on Pleasant Street” (old people think the young, rich people live there who want all the bars and things to come in)

Being neighbors and working with others and doing things for them is going to change the dynamic between “new” and “old” Fountain Square people

Neighborhood becoming not affordable – people who are selling their homes have to go east

Homes are being marketed to empty nesters who can afford more expensive homes, not people on fixed incomes who need a place to live – lose diversity

Interested in the perspective of the new people moving in and what their thoughts on the neighborhood are

Interview with the Kobe Community Group: November 12, 2018

- **How does Fountain Square Presbyterian define its community?**
 - o **i.e. physical boundaries, school district boundaries, neighborhood boundaries, cultural boundaries, etc.**

Fletcher Place, Bates-Hendricks, Southeast part of Indy in general

Cultural: arts-heavy emphasis (from Redeemer)

Schools – IPS, the Oaks, Herron

Many of their group lives or works around U Indy – Carson Heights/University Heights

Many of the congregation originally from the Midwest

- **What are some ways you currently interact with people in the Fountain Square community on a daily basis?**
 - o **i.e. do you walk to work and see people on your way, do you work in Fountain Square, do you volunteer in Fountain Square, do you hold events in Fountain Square, etc.**

“Eat at Red Lion a lot” – Support the local businesses

Calvin Fletcher’s

Library, Scare on the Square (events in FS)

Inviting people in for game nights – euchre, etc.

Harder to see people on a REGULAR basis if you’re not living in FS

Have to seek people out at restaurants and events

Block captains in Fletcher place – mostly picking up trash

Annual yard sale for Fletcher Place

Arts Squared festival (what we did the float for in September?)

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Taking care of greenspaces in the neighborhood

Some sports leagues

Walking to work

Neighborhood Association – used to be on the board but not anymore (Rhonda's husband I believe)

- What are some things you enjoy about the community?

This has shifted over the past couple years with stores leaving and shifting in type and style

Calvin Fletcher's – always see someone they know

Walkability/accessibility especially with the cultural trail

Walking the dog/being able to go to dog-friendly places – also able to meet a lot of people through the dog

Some of the open festivals (Italian Fest, etc.) and are able to walk around and see people

Young children are welcome in many of the restaurants/areas

Library

- **What are some of your favorite third places in the community?**
 - o i.e. coffee shops, gyms, parks, restaurants, libraries, churches, etc. **What opportunities for collaboration exist here?**

Dairy Queen, Wildwood, Peppy's, Amelia's, Lacy Park

Lots of amenities in a small area – quaint small town, very pleasant feeling

Free parking! Easy to find parking and able to walk to games downtown – close proximity

Cultural Trail – awesome to bike to different places on the trail

- **What are some of the issues you see in the community?**
 - o i.e. poverty, broken families, education levels, job loss, mental illness, etc.

Exploring Community Development within the Church

Increase in the homeless population – people camped out on the street/cultural trail, etc. People curious about the homeless population and where they go, what they do, etc.

Some businesses struggling to stay afloat – just in general the restaurant business is very competitive but a high amount of turnover currently

Gentrification causing people to move on and leave the neighborhood – easy to sell the house for a large profit. Affect Fountain Square, Fletcher Place, and Bates-Hendricks

Less and less middle class in the area – hard for families with kids

On the flip side- also have absentee landlords, people that don't live in the houses on a regular basis.

Full Air BNB households – also causes a problem for neighborhood cohesiveness

Some property taxes have been grandfathered in and do not increase with the houses' appreciation

Hard to find a good place to live for families – too small for too much money

There are more people living here than 5 years ago

Neighbors have cracked down on drug houses – less sketch houses now

Cultural trail has increased the amount of businesses

- **What are some of the barriers to addressing these issues?**
- **What changes have you seen in the community in the past 5 years?**
 - o **What changes have been positive?**
 - o **What have been negative?**

Extra Q's – What do you think the resources in the FSPC congregation are?

- **Teachers, counselors, artists**

Exploring Community Development within the Church

- **See the value of people partnering with other organizations on their own vs. us doing things together as a congregation for which the church is passionate**
- **Emphasize taking care of each other in the congregation vs. too work-focused, just having busy work**